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THURSDAY DECEMBER 8TH, 2016

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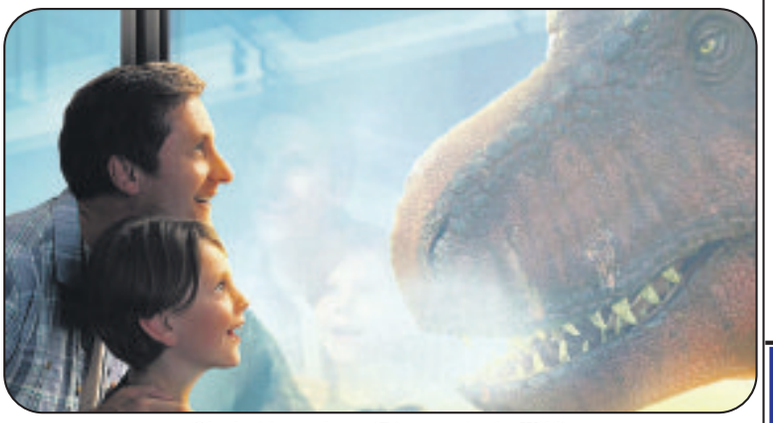
CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH PARK CRESCENT

Chad aged eight is a monster hit with 'Dinosaurs in the Park'



Chad wide-eyed at a 'Dinosaur in the Wild'.

A Llangan Primary School pupil is featured in the marketing of a new dinosaur park attraction set to open next year.

Chad Hawkins (8) who lives in Pencoed, is shown in the main picture publicising the park.

His mother Gemma said: "Chad is shown in the publicity material for Dinosaurs in the Wild, a new live action dinosaur theme park launching at Birmingham NEC in June 2017 and due to go to Manchester Event City.

"The dinosaur photos will be seen online in tube stations and bus stations around the uk."

Chad started with the London Modelling Agency at the age of three.

Jobs flooded in and he was on set immediately with the likes of Debenhams and Next in London shooting for their advertising campaigns, magazines and online stores.

Gemma added: "He attended many shoots and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it

"He remained with the agent for three years and attended castings with Gucci, Asda, Ikea, Waitrose and many more,.

"Once his contract was up we decided to have a change and team up with an agent in Bristol and Manchester.

"He has had jobs for Halifax, Trunki, NSPCC, Bristol Airport and now his latest job for Dinosaurs in the Wild.

"Recently he has attending a casting for Burberry and is waiting to hear back from them."

Chad attends Llangan Primary School which has been very supportive of his modelling career.

He is a keen young sportsman and hopes to become a child acting star in the future.

FUNDRAISING CHAMPS FOR VELINDRE APPEAL

AFTER several months fundraising, Gareth and Hywel Petty have handed over a cheque for £3,225.76 to Mike Locke from Velindre cancer centre.

The father and son's efforts included the World Half Marathon and the Cardiff Triathlon.

They also held a charity auction/raffle night at the Edmondes Arms. The evening included a fantastic £400, raised by Trish Kinman from the sale of her delicious preservatives!

Gareth and Hywel had set themselves a target of £1,000 before the events and were amazed at the response from friends and family that helped them far exceed their original goal.

They told The GEM: "We both want to thank everyone for the fantastic support we've received in helping us achieve this amount and hopefully it will help make a difference in the future".

...And there was another great fundraising effort for the Velindre appeal at the Christmas lunch and charity auction at the Bear Hotel, which raised £14,000.

• More pictures by Mike Wilcock on page 12.

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Readers' Letters

Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

• Letters and e-mails MUST include your FULL address and a contact telephone number.

An email address alone is not sufficient!

We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail.

Barry Appeal raised £52,723

WE'VE just finalised our end of Poppy Appeal accounts for Barry, Rhoose and Peterston-super-Ely.

A massive £52,555.68 has been banked, with payment of £168 outstanding for wreaths, making the total £52,723.68.

This compares to £43,680.11 at the same time last year, when in a 12-month period, October 1 to September 30, 2016, our year-long total was £46,900 – and for the 2014/15 year it was £51,500 – so we've overtaken those figures already with 10 months of low-key fundraising stillto go!

Worth mentioning is the fantastic input of the young people who contributed £25,580.76 (50.5 per cent of the total raised), by volunteering or donating to schools and youth group-led initiatives.

We cannot begin to list all the people we need to thank... volunteers, shops, those who decorated and lit up buildings, those who gave money so generously, schools, youth groups... thank you all – every penny really will make a difference.

Roy and Teresa Goodwin,
Barry Poppy Appeal.

Autumn fayre 'huge success'

THE Parish of St Andrews Major would like to thank all of those who helped make their autumn fayre a huge success.

The fayre on November 26 at the Parish Hall, Dinas Powys, raised in excess of £2,000; this fantastic sum will be split between four charities: Dinas Powys Scouts and Guides, Amelia Farm Trust, Marie Curie and Ty Hapus.

The fayre is an annual event and next year's is already booked for Saturday, November 25!

Judith Anderson, *Parish Administrator.*

'STAMP OUT THE DOG FOUL'

I FIND the views of Mr Trevor Honychurch very naïve (GEM letters, November 24). How can he so easily dismiss the dangers of dog foul, and what it can do if it infects a cut or gets in an eye?

The fact that not many cases of ill health have been documented, is testament to the cleaning up of the fields prior to and during matches, as much as anything else.

He may feel that exercising dogs on public land is a democratic activity, but I would remind him that we are talking about designated playing fields, used by many children – and not just for half a day, but Saturday, Sunday, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

They are, of course, also used by the public for ad-hoc kick-abouts.

There are many places to walk a dog, or let it run, without it being on playing fields, so I would urge him to take his head out of the sand and recognise we have a duty of care to our children.

Maybe he doesn't feel the need to do so, but we, as a rugby club, must do. His help would be appreciated.

Gerwyn Thomas, Llantwit Major.

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Record year for Poppy Appeal in Cowbridge

THE Poppy Appeal is over for another year, the counting has been completed and it has proved to be an excellent year for Cowbridge.

The Cowbridge Area Poppy Appeal street collection, plus that raised by schools, shops, businesses, pubs etc, raised a total of over £14,600 this year, which is over £1,000 up on last year.

The grand total to date, including money from other sources such as the Remembrance Day Service collection, donations and wreaths, is already a little over £18,000 and is likely to top £19,000 – an all time record for Cowbridge.

Many people deserve thanks for their time, effort, and generosity:

Firstly, the people of the Cowbridge area and visitors who were so willing to donate to such a good cause and who raised this incredible amount.

Thanks also to the shops, schools, pubs and businesses who sold trays of poppies and collected for the appeal. The schools did especially well this year, raising close on £1,500. Special thanks go to the British Legion and Rotary collectors on the streets and those in Waitrose.

Even though this year's weather was a little kinder than some years, it did become bitterly cold out on the street at times. Thanks also to CADS for donating the proceeds from their Friday night performance to the appeal.

Thanks must go also go to those who helped create the 'atmosphere' in the town. The ladies of Cutting Edge who produced the large felt poppies and quilts for shop windows, and the retailers who displayed them, around 60 taking part, especially those who decorated their windows in response to the 'Paint the Town Red' initiative. Your contribution was very much appreciated by both the Poppy Appeal, and the public.

This year's Poppy Appeal was a wonderful example of what can be achieved by the whole town working together for a worthwhile cause. A very big 'thank you' to all who took part in any way.

David Howell,
Poppy Appeal organiser.

Is this the real TV remote control?

EVERY adult in Britain knows that the billion pound advertising industry sets out to affect the mind of every child in the nation from their earliest years.

Some TV adverts can implant negative values into a child's mind, creating self-centred adults who are slaves of consumerism, today's religion.

Any parents and grandparents who were trapped by the same damaging culture, accept it, because they may know no better.

What a strange form of unnatural society, where the parents who love their children are accomplices in the planned distortion of their children's values; all to suit a tiny number of dishonest plutocrats who control it.

Neville Westerman, Brynna.

Why *don't* we celebrate 'The 12 days of Christmas'?

THE 12 days begin on Christmas Day itself and end on January 5 – the even of 12th Night.

In other countries in Europe and Latin America, after Christmas Day itself there is always the excitement leading up to the New Year displays, and this is followed by the excitement on January 6 – the 12th Night of parades and fireworks, and even bonfires in country places, with the wise kings on horses – even sometimes camels – throwing goodies to the crowds lining the routes.

Then the children have the joy of opening their presents on the morning of 12th Night itself.

In Spanish-speaking countries this is all known as 'Reyes' – kings. The shops' pre-sales begin even before

The GEM reported, a number of years back, that a small boy said to his mother: "*Mummy, there is nothing between New Year and going back to school.*"

I can also recall that we took our two eldest small boys up to London in the '50s on Boxing Day the 26th) to see all the splendid festive windows down Regent Street, only to find them blocked by blinds down, and doors closed

Even Hamleys, the world-renowned toyshop, was closed, all because 'sales' were about to begin – ample evidence of being a 'nation of shopkeepers' as Napoleon called us.

But it need not be so.

Perhaps we can re-look at the 12 days of Christmas. In Cowbridge, the Cricket Club has wonderful bonfires and fireworks displays on November 5, Guy Fawkes Night.

There is a reindeer parade down the High Street in early December; and the Churches Together In Cowbridge have a fundraising Nativity parade through the Old Hall Gardens, but before Christmas Day.

All these could be brought together; and no doubt the Amelia Trust Farm could provide us with donkeys, and local riding schools can provide horses for any parade contemplated for us to celebrate the end of the 12 days of Christmas.

'Father Christmas time' is that leading up to Christmas Day, also known as Advent, and is only a few centuries old.

The 12 Days of Christmas go back some 2,000 years.

One could get the children also involved in looking up the histories of these days, which would add to their excitement.

E Cavan

DINAS POWYS BYPASS: 'Let's put party politics aside'

IT was disappointing to read the letter from Plaid Cymru councillor Chris Franks on the Dinas Powys bypass in last week's GEM, particularly after attending what seemed to be a constructive meeting with him a few days earlier.

The public meeting was arranged by Dinas Powys Conservatives, but deliberately designed to be non-political, which was why invitations were extended to representatives from all parties, including Vale Labour AM Jane Hutt, Alun Cairns MP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure Ken Skates, and councillors Lis Burnett, Peter King, Bronwen Brooks and Chris Williams.

Indeed, Coun Franks himself spoke in the meeting, and I deliberately asked him to participate so that all parties would be represented on what is a vital issue for the future of the village and surrounding areas.

The meeting was arranged following encouraging comments from Ken Skates, saying he was happy to look at facilitating a solution to the longstanding problem.

He may be from a different party to mine, but this is the most promising situation there has been for years, and it is vital we all work hard to sort it out.

That means putting party politics aside and standing as one.

I thought that had been made quite clear in the run-up to the meeting, and especially so following the outcome.

The only thing I can assume is that Plaid didn't get the memo!

Andrew RT Davies,
South Wales Central Regional AM (leader, Welsh Conservatives).

Cancer group 'thank you'

THE Cowbridge committee for Cancer Research UK would like to thank our supporters who raised £1,227 at the coffee morning recently held at Penny Farthing Cafe.

Thanks also to the staff and volunteers who helped make this such a successful event.

The committee is grateful for the continued support of the people and businesses of Cowbridge and wishes everyone a happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year.

Lastly, we would like to thank The GEM, who continue to publicise our activities.

Fran Davies,
(on behalf of Cowbridge committee of Cancer Research UK).

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL DECEMBER 15)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
08 Thur			12.34	8.2
09 Fri	01.13	8.3	13.47	8.4
10 Sat	02.24	8.6	14.55	8.9
11 Sun	03.29	9.0	15.57	9.4
12 Mon	04.27	9.7	16.53	9.8
13 Tues	05.21	10.0	17.48	10.2
14 Wed	06.12	10.3	18.38	10.4
15 Thur	06.59	10.5	19.28	10.4

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

The Glamorgan GEM • Contact us...

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COWBRIDGE WALKING NATIVITY RETURNS

FOR two days this month (December 9-10), Cowbridge will become the little town of Bethlehem, when the Cowbridge Walking Nativity returns for its fourth year by popular demand, with two nights to choose from.

The Nativity, with parts all played by adults drawn from all the churches in Cowbridge, is set in the atmospheric surroundings of Old Hall Gardens and the Physic Garden, starting outside the Library at 6pm. The event unfolds with Mary and Joseph slowly making their way to Bethlehem in search of somewhere to stay. As they go, the audience follow and carols are sung at each stage of the journey.

After pausing to sing a carol we move along to meet the innkeepers as they turn the visitors away from their warm lodgings. We see the shepherds when an angel speaks to them of a great new birth. Later we watch the wise men following a star and join them on their long journey.

Then in the Physic Garden, we watch as the wise-men meet Herod and see the drama unfold as he learns of a new king. Finally we all arrive at the stable, and celebrate the joy of Christmas and happiness at the birth of Jesus.

The Walking Nativity is free of charge, as are the refreshments that will be provided at the end of the Nativity Journey. It is suitable for all ages, young and old and lasts approx. three-quarters of an hour. So grab a torch, wrap up warmly, it is an outside event and will go ahead whatever the weather, although the refreshments maybe served inside. *Join us at this special event that really puts the heart back into Christmas. For more information, telephone 01446 775048.*

THE TOWN MAYOR REPORTS

Hectic month shows what makes Cowbridge special

THE month of November was very busy and I attended a number of events which demonstrated what makes Cowbridge such a special place to live.

The creative side of Cowbridge was evident at the annual award ceremony of the Cowbridge Arts Society held in the Old Hall, where I was invited to present the awards to some very talented artists.

Cowbridge Amateur Dramatic Society reminded us of the suffering and personal loss suffered during the First World War when they performed two short plays in their atmospheric little theatre. An appropriate performance given the time of year.

Remembrance Day itself was marked with two minutes' silence outside the Town Hall, to be followed a few days later with the full Civic Service of Remembrance, commencing with wreath laying at the War Memorial followed by a Service of Remembrance at Holy Cross Church.

It was a very moving day and I was so pleased that so many people, especially children and younger people attended and their presence added to the significance of the day.

The History Society invited me to the launch of their new publication, 'An Historical Miscellany', which adds to their already impressive list of books reliving Cowbridge's past.

The Christmas Tree festival is another well established event in the town's calendar. The church looks so festive with so many trees donated by local groups lighting up the interior, and I was delighted to attend both the preview evening, and the following evening's concert given by the Cowbridge Male Voice Choir. It was great to see Shelley back in charge for the first time since last year, keeping the "boys" in good order.

I spent an enjoyable morning with the Cowbridge Scout Group in Poplars Park planting a

number of young trees. We planted over 100 saplings in a very short time! Well done Beavers, Cubs and Scouts!

The month concluded with the Reindeer Parade, an event which brings in literally thousands of people to Cowbridge. This is such an important event which not only provides a great family day out, but also showcases the town to many people who have not been here before. I enjoyed a grandstand view of the parade, met Father Christmas, and even sang a Christmas carol with Aubrey!

On a sadder note, I attended the funeral of our local Police Community Support Officer, Hilary O'Callaghan, a well-loved character around town. We shall miss her.

I held a coffee morning on behalf of the Forget Me Not Chorus. My thanks to those who support these mornings. My next coffee morning will be on January 7. Please come and join me.

One final thought: as we run up to Christmas. Our little town relies on the support we all give to local traders, without whom the town would lose its unique charm. Please continue to support them at this important time of the year.

Merry Christmas to you all!

COUN LIZ GEORGE
Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian

Local primary pupils design festive cards

HRT Cowbridge have held a 'Design a Christmas Card' competition for all pupils at Y Bont Faen Primary School.

On December 2, HRT director Rob Calcaterra and sales manager Sharon Stephens, who were impressed by the standard of work, were delighted to present the six proud winners with their prizes during a special award assembly.

Foundation Phase winners were Finley Mitten (nursery), Isabella Smith (reception) and Matt Bourke (year-2). Key Stage 2 winners were Layla Marley (year-4), Rachel Hardy (year-5) and Ella Gillette (year-6). Each received WHSmith gift tokens.

Brexit Secretary a dab hand on the griddle!

SECRETARY of State for Exiting the European Union, David Davis MP, was spotted making Welsh cakes in a popular Cowbridge Deli last week.

The high-profile cabinet minister, and Vale MP Alun Cairns, visited the Elephant and Bun to promote small businesses ahead of Mr Davis' speech to the Welsh CBI and Small Business Saturday.

The Brexit Secretary is fond of Welsh cakes and, according to Mr Cairns, was a 'dab-hand on the griddle'.

Television crews turned up to capture the spectacle and it was broadcast on evening news bulletins across the country.

Jack O Farrington, owner of the Elephant and Bun, described the visit as "slightly surreal, but great fun".

He said: "It was slightly surreal to have the Brexit Secretary cooking a batch of our Welsh cakes last week. He had decided that he wanted to make some Welsh cakes while he was in Wales, so Alun Cairns suggested that the Elephant and Bun would be the place to do it.

"Our Welsh cakes have quite a strong local following, and it was great fun to gain another fan of them in the Cabinet.

"We had customers coming in the shop the next day loving the fact they recognised us on the news, and asked if David Davis took any Welsh cakes home with him."

Police seek local man

POLICE are appealing for information leading to the whereabouts of Daniel Murphy, aged 48, from the Barry area, who is wanted for recall to prison.

A warrant has been issued for his arrest for failing to comply with licence conditions.

Anybody who has seen him is urged to contact South Wales Police, via 101 quoting reference 1600465812 or call Crimestoppers free and anonymously on 0800 555 111.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Your local correspondent is
NANCY DAVIDGE
"Tynewydd", Llangan.
(01656) 860303
TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Christmas services

THE St Mary Hill church will begin their Christmas festivities with their Christmas carol service on Sunday, December 18 at 11.15am, and on Christmas Day a service will take place at 11am. Everyone wishing to attend will be assured of a warm welcome.

St Canna's Church

THE annual non-Eucharist service of lessons and carols at Llangan will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 11.15am.

A warm welcome is extended to everyone wishing to attend. I understand mince pies will be served at this celebration.

On Christmas Day, the Eucharist service will be held at 9.30am.

Saron Chapel

THIS year's Christmas carol service at Treoes will take place at 3pm on Sunday, December 11 when the local children will be able to perform with singing, poems and musical talent.

Following the service, the children and their parents will proceed to the village hall to enjoy the Christmas tea party.

Hopefully, children from Llangan and St Mary Hill will be able to join in the Treoes Christmas celebration.

Christmas carols

GO along to the Treoes village hall on Saturday, December 17 at 6pm and be entertained by the Ogmore Silver Band. Entry is free.

Get well!

TO Young At Heart Club members, Anne Ellis and Jean Thomas, who are both recuperating at their Treoes homes following their stay at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend.

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ANNUAL SANTA RUN ROUND THE VALE RAISES FUNDS FOR CHARITY

A group of motorcycling Santas travelled round the Vale on a charity fundraising exercise.

GEM photographer, Glyn Evans, was on hand to capture the colourful procession. As you can see, the motorcycles were suitably decorated.

ABOVE: Young children were thrilled to see so many Santas – Christmas is just 17 days away!

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

OTHER PICTURES ARE AVAILABLE

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Lions 'thank you' – and look forward to 2017

LLANTWIT MAJOR and Cowbridge Lions would like to say a 'big thank you' to all those who generously gave to their bucket collection during the Reindeer Parade, those who helped on the day, and Cowbridge Chamber of Trade who fund and organise the parade.

The Lions provide stewarding at the parade, do a charity bucket collection, look after Santa and arrange a grotto which was a great success.

A spokesman said: "Thanks to the generosity of those who attended £1,400 was collected on the street and £200 in the grotto. This money will be allocated to local good causes including the Vale Big Wrap, which provides Christmas presents to Vale children who would otherwise go without, Cowbridge Gateway Monday Club, Vale Food Bank, Barnardo's, Samaritans and Cowbridge Rotary, who assisted with the collection.

"It is not of course just about the money. It is a great event and is enjoyed by a great many people of all ages.

"The day before the Reindeer Parade, the Lions were out with their burger stall at the Llantwit Major Christmas lights event. This raised more money for the Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions Club Charitable Trust Fund to distribute.

"The next event for Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions is the annual Wassail, an evening of traditional Christmas entertainment, in the Llantonian Hall, Llantwit Major on Saturday, December 17. Tickets are available from any club member and from Sloan & Co. in the Precinct, Llantwit Major priced at £10."

In the New Year, Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions will be planning their 2017 programme which will include the Cowbridge May Fair, scheduled for Bank Holiday Monday, May 1. If you would like to take part please contact Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions on 0845 833 6763 or info@lmandclions.org.uk or via the website or Facebook or Twitter.

The event will build on the very successful 2013 and 2015 May fairs and demand for stalls and stage slots is expected to be high.

For more information on the Lions events and photos from these events please visit the Lions website at *www.lmandclions.org.uk* or via Facebook on www.facebook.com/lmandclions.

JOHN ANDREW

Becoming more like Alfie at a boot camp!

Alfie at a boot camp.

WELSH rugby legend Gareth 'Alfie' Thomas has again teamed up with George Thomas Hospice Care and Forces Fitness to organise a fun fitness boot camp to raise money for the charity and its role as a major provider of hospice care.

Alfie, famed for his fitness, will push participants to their limits as they do military circuits, boxing, hill treks, log exercises and lots more throughout the Saturday and Sunday camp.

The event will be run by Forces Fitness and the instructors will be former serving soldiers.

The boot camp will be held at the Bryn Bettws Lodge in the Afan Valley next May 13 and 14. Accommodation and all food will be included.

Alfie said: "These camps are great fun and I always enjoy them. I'll be shouting lots of advice and encouraging those taking part to get to the finishing line. I'm delighted that it is raising money for George Thomas Hospice Care, they do such a wonderful job caring for patients with life-threatening illnesses."

To take part, participants have to pay a £40 registration fee and then raise a minimum of £250 in sponsorship.

Alternatively, they can pay a registration fee of £250.

To register or for more information, see www.gthc.org.uk or call GTHC on 029 2052 4150.

Looked-after child 'failed by council' says Ombudsman

BRIDGEND County Borough Council (BCBC), which failed to adequately monitor a 'looked-after' child's savings accounts, leaving him with less money than he believed he was entitled to, has been criticised by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Ombudsman, Nick Bennett, has called on BCBC to provide his office with its proposals and action plan for reviewing other looked after children's cases amid concerns that the failings identified could be systemic and affect other looked after children in the BCBC's care.

Mr N, (anonymised), who was two when he and his brother were placed with foster carers, complained to the Ombudsman after his placement broke down in 2014.

He said that:

• The BCBC had not managed his savings properly and in accordance with its policy;

• Some of his savings were used, without consultation with him, to pay for trips for which he should have received a special allowance.

• The savings he received in January 2015 were substantially less than he believed they should have been.

An investigation found that the BCBC's monitoring was "both intermittent and inadequate" and amounted to maladministration. It also failed to keep adequate records or retain his saving books at the end of his fostering placement, and this meant it was unclear why Mr N's savings were as low as they were.

BCBC acknowledged that when Mr N made his original complaint to it, its response might have appeared "dismissive or unsympathetic" and apologised saying this had not been its intention.

The Ombudsman said the case raised important issues over looked after children and their savings at a local, regional and national level and he had shared the report with the Welsh Government.

He emphasised that he had made no criticism of the foster carers in his report, and that his investigation was solely about the Council's actions.

The Ombudsman made a series of recommendations, including that the Council should make a payment of £3,310 to Mr N.

To date, BCBC has not done so.

Mr Bennett, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, said: "I hope that the issues my investigation has raised will lead to positive changes and the development of further national policy on long term savings for looked after children, reflecting the need for councils to secure the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children.

"The complainant deserves to have this payment made to him and I am most disappointed that to date, the Council has refused to do so.

"If it maintains this position, I will be forced to issue a further special report, something which I have only done once in my tenure as Ombudsman."

A BCBC spokesperson said: "Firstly, we welcome the fact that the Ombudsman will be sharing his report with the Welsh Government for discussion at a national level.

"There is currently no legal requirement or national policy in place regarding the savings of looked after children and, as a result, we cannot enforce the need for foster carers to provide savings for looked after children.

"All foster carers are merely asked to either save on behalf of the children they care for, or encourage the child to start saving themselves.

"As there is no mandatory savings policy in place for us and other local authorities to follow, we have asked the National Fostering Framework to consider establishing one.

"We acknowledge the Ombudsman's report and accept all of their recommendations with the exception of recommendation (b) – to make a payment to Mr N to reimburse him for savings that had not been made for him during his time in foster care – as our position is that Mr N has not suffered injustice or hardship.

"We take our role as corporate parents for looked after children extremely seriously, and will be taking actions to address the other recommendations made by the Ombudsman."

Community group takes over St Athan library

LEFT: SACHaL trustees Derek Willmot (left front) and Graham Mallaghan (right front) with Chris Edwards (rear left) and Andy Borsden (rear right) of the Vale Council.

THE Vale Council has transferred St Athan library and the running of library services for the village to St Athan Community Hub and Library (SACHaL), a local charitable incorporated organisation founded by residents of St Athan.

SACHaL will continue to provide library and information services to members, and much-needed social activities, learning opportunities, and other support to the wider community.

Chair Graham Mallaghan said: "This day has been long in the making, but our community's library service has now been secured for the future, while we also hope to establish more activities open to all – continually developing our services in cooperation with the people of our village and ward."

Coun Derek Willmot, of St Athan Community Council, added: "The community council welcomes this new and interesting venture and will work hard with SACHaL to create a vibrant library and community hub for our residents".

The Vale Council culture and community learning manager, Phil Southard, reiterated the council's position at the handover: "This is a positive move by members of the community, and they should be commended for taking on the running of their library. The Vale Council will do all it can to support the group – helping them to become sustainable and to flourish."

A programme of launch events for SACHaL designed to promote the new set-up and attract volunteers to help run the facility will take place in the New Year. In the meantime, anyone interesting in joining the group should contact volunteer co-ordinator Alison Haden by email to stathanlibrary@gmail.com.

PUTTING A SOCK IN IMPULSE BUYING

DOGS Trust Bridgend is taking a stand against impulse puppy purchasing by changing its name to Socks Trust, encouraging Brits to 'Give Socks Not Dogs' this Christmas.

To highlight the number of Christmas gift pups given up by ill-prepared owners, the charity has created a line of festive socks featuring some of the hounds left abandoned over the festive season.

One of these hounds is Dame Joan Collins. Dame Joan Collins was one of a litter of six puppies that found themselves homeless. The puppies were cared for by the staff at Dogs Trust centre at Bridgend and were named after the 2015 New Year's Honours list.

Last year, Dogs Trust Bridgend received 446 calls in the weeks following Christmas from new owners wanting to give up their dog, with a total of 121 unwanted dogs handed in during this period alone.

Championing the most conventional and possibly least returned Christmas present of all – a safe pair of socks – Socks Trust is working to avoid the plight of puppies bought on a whim and neglected when the reality of dog ownership sinks in.

For more information about Socks Trust and how you can purchase a pair of socks to support the cause, visit www.sockstrust.org.uk and search #GiveSocksNotDogs on social media.

Will you sponsor a talking book?

WALES' largest sight loss charity RNIB Cymru is encouraging local groups and businesses to 'Sponsor a Talking Book' and give the gift of reading this Christmas in lieu of cards or presents.

It is a Christmas gift that will truly last forever.

RNIB Cymru marked the centenary of one of the country's best-loved children's authors Roald Dahl by turning his books into Welsh language Talking Books with an event in Cardiff's National Museum on November 8.

Roald Dahl, who lived for many years in Cardiff, was himself no stranger to RNIB's Talking Books library, a collection of over 23,000 audio recordings. He voiced *James and the Giant Peach* in English, with a special introduction for blind and partially sighted readers.

The charity will now make his works accessible in Welsh as Talking Books for the first time and will bring in professional narrators to voice his stories. Talking Books help create a lifeline to the outside world for blind and partially sighted people. There are 6,034 Talking Books customers and over 106,000 people living with sight loss in Wales.

The RNIB Library offers a range of fiction and non-fiction titles for adults and children in braille and giant print.

To find out more about the RNIB Library call 0303 123 9999 or visit www.rnib.org.uk.

Go to **The GEM** for the latest stories and breaking news... **www.glamorgan-gem.co.uk**

Local students show their talent in Rotary Young Musician competition

ON the evening of Wednesday, November 30 in Cowbridge School hall, seven young instrumentalists met to compete in the club round of the Rotary Young Musician competition.

The evening began with harpist Rhys Wardhaugh from Cowbridge School who played 'Danza De Luzma' by Ortiz followed by 'Nataliana' by Henson-Conant.

The next competitor was Alice Voisey Smith from Cowbridge School playing the first movement of 'Sonate' by Camille Saint-Saëns, followed by 'Romanza' from the second movement of Poulenc's clarinet sonata.

The next competitor, Rhodri Richards a pianist from Llantwit Major School, played contrasting pieces: 'Allegro' by J L Krebs, 'Thema Mit Variationen' by Schumann and lastly, 'Long Deng Diao' by Jian Zhong Wang.

Linnea Stenlund-Roderick from Cowbridge School came in third place on the harp playing 'La Source' by Zabel and 'Viejo Zortzico' by Guridi.

In second place Emily Jenkins from Cowbridge School on flute played Allegro from 'Flute Quartet in D major' by Mozart and finished with 'Hypnosis' by Ian Clarke.

As the competition was a joint Rotary Club event shared between Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Rotary Clubs, there were two first prize winners, one from each school. This was just as well, because the judges felt there was little to choose between Cowbridge harpist Ioan Wardhaugh and Llantwit Major pianist Rhys Richards, who were both awarded first prize. Ioan played movement one from Handel's 'Harp Concerto', followed by 'Etude de Concert' by Felix Godefroid. Both pieces were played with great skill and musical expression.

Rhys, who was also last year's winner played 'Allegro Moderato' by Edvard Grieg, 'Prelude and Fugue' by Bach and lastly 'Bulgarian Dance No. 4' by Bartok.

These pieces, particularly the Grieg, were played with great intensity and passion.

It is interesting to note that both Ioan and Rhys were competing against their younger brothers Rhys (Wardhaugh) and Rhodri.

The panel of judges was made up of Mary Noyes, Nic Treharne and Hugh Phillips.

Hugh has never adjudicated at the local Rotary Young Musician Competition before and said that he was very impressed with the high standard shown by these talented young instrumentalists.

The competitors and judges.

While the judges were conferring in private, making their decisions on who would win prizes, the audience was treated to some fine entertainment by Cowbridge School students.

Charlotte Bonney (last year's vocalist winner) sang 'My Funny Valentine', 'Makin' Whoopie' and 'Take the 'A' Train', accompanied on piano by Mr Adrian Colborne, head of performing arts.

Next the Cowbridge School jazz group performed 'The Chicken' by Pee Wee Ellis and 'Doxy' by Sonny Rollins. Individuals in the group were encouraged by Mr Colborne to improvise during the performance.

The group was made up of three trumpeters: Tom Graham Jose, Michael Hain and Tom Evans; Alice Voisey Smith on the clarinet, Ed Sunderland (bass), Harry Laken (drums), Ben Roberts (congas) and of course Adrian Colborne on the piano.

President Charles Anderson of Llantwit Major Rotary Club, in giving thanks to the competitors and judges, wished the first prize winners Ioan and Rhys success in the next round of the competition, which would most likely take place in January 2017. **TC**

MORE IMAGES EMERGE FROM THE HISTORY ROOM

THANK you to those who have contacted me with information about the group photographs which were published in a recent GEM.

It seems that the top photo was of a group leaving the Horse and Groom for an outing, and the bottom one was taken at Maindy Chapel. No news on the men with medals so far!

Meanwhile, I have had photographs and details sent to me from the great-nephew of the former caretaker of Old Hall (Will Hawkins) in the 1930s, when Old Hall was being used as part of Cowbridge Grammar School.

He came to the town from Tonyrefail. This photo shows the sunken garden (which is now the pond) in the gardens at the back of the building.

BETTY ALDEN
(01446 773373; bettyalden1@gmail.com)

Advent calendars spread Christmas cheer at hospice

CHRISTMAS has well and truly arrived at the Marie Curie hospice in Penarth – with a patient a day being treated to a gift from ward advent calendars.

The festive treat was the idea of staff nurse Gwyneth Davies and healthcare assistant Aimee-Leigh Williams, who both work at the Marie Curie, Cardiff and the Vale Hospice, which provides round-the-clock expert care and support to those living with terminal illness and their families, a spokeswoman reports.

Following the donation of one advent calendar from Josie Llewellyn, whose grandmother died at the hospice two years ago, nurse Lauren James said she and her mum would create a second advent calendar to donate, so that both the ground floor and first floor wards could have one.

The material advent calendars now have pride of place on both the ground floor and first floor wards and the hospice, and staff have donated small gifts to put in each day, such as small bottles of wine, chocolate coins and other items. They will then give a gift to a patient each day leading up to Christmas.

Aimee-Leigh said: "We'll have a set time each day to draw the gift, and then we will present it to one of our patients, who has won via a raffle ticket system. It's a way for us to bring the spirit of the festive season into the hospice, and help make the stay for the patients as cheerful as we can.

"We try all year around to make sure they are included in festivities, including making sure they have access to the rugby internationals when they are on, or including them in Hallowe'en or St David's Day celebrations."

Josie said: "I started doing it and when I told my mum, she came on board and really helped me put it together. The Marie Curie hospice is a place close to our heart because her mum, my grandmother, died here two years ago."

There were two winners on the first floor ward on December 1. The first was Jean Baker, who was heading home that afternoon and received a box of biscuits.

The second ticket, which was picked out by two-and-a-half year old Dylan Willis, was won by his great grandmother Nora, who had hand cream from the calendar. Jean said her husband was "delighted" with the prize.

'Ice Central a success'

I WOULD like to give praise where it is due and say well done to the organisers of 'Ice Central' in Barry for a fantastic idea.

The Christmas themed ice rink created a very happy environment for all ages and fun was had by all in a very nice atmosphere.

The lights looked amazing and it was very well put together so congratulations on bringing this great idea to our town.

All the feedback received has in been very positive and people are saying this is just what the town needs. I raised the idea at councillors' questions about five years ago and I am glad to see it has become a reality.

Probably the only criticism that can be made is that it was not on long enough for it to be enjoyed more, and I would like to ask if it could be available longer in future years?

Coun Richard Bertin, Barry,
Independent, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Journalist speaks to Merched y Wawr

TWELI GRIFFITHS, the renowned Welsh journalist, was the guest speaker at our November meeting.

He took us over years of travelling the world to bring us television and radio programmes on the crucial issues of the day.

He told us of his experiences producing programmes on Mandela and Castro, as well as his historical interview with Colonel Gaddafi.

His tales covered the hilarious and the desperate, as well as some harrowing experiences he encountered.

To cap it all, he told us of his obsession with conjuring since the age of nine. He proceeded to baffle us with some very clever tricks. What an interesting evening!

TWELI GRIFFITHS, y newyddiadurwr profiadol oedd ein gŵr gwadd ym mis Tachwedd.

Aeth â ni trwy flynyddoedd o deithio'r byd i ddod â rhaglenni teledu a radio atom ar bynciau mawr y dydd.

Soniodd am ei brofiadau yn cynhyrchu rhaglenni ar Mandela a Chastro a'i gyfweliad hanesyddol gyda Cyrnol Gaddafi.

Cawsom ganddo'r llon a'r lleddf yn ogystal â'r troeon trwstan lle'r oedd ei fywyd mewn perygl – cael a chael oedd hi i ddod allan o'r sefyllfa. I goroni'r cyfan soniodd am ei obsesiwn â chonsuriaeth ers yn naw oed. Aeth ati i'n diddanu gyda thriciau ddaru ein gadael mewn penbleth llwyr. Noson ddifyr yn wir! **MC**

Mayfar lady's generosity

SUE Pang from Mayfar, the Chinese takeaway in Llantwit Major, recently donated cash to the Mayor of Llantwit Major, Coun Sally Hanks for her two charities.

Sue has for the past two years been collecting tip money and other loose change given by customers, which totalled some £310.65.

Sue has also personally given another £100 to the charities, which are The Ed Evans Foundation and Marie Curie Penarth.

This generous donation will help both charities and has boosted the Mayor's fundraising for her year.

WAR HERO'S MEDALS ARE RETURNED TO THE TOWN OF BARRY

ABOVE: Lieutenant Charles R Froom's 'Star Trio' .

LEFT: Glenn Booker, chairman of the Barry at War group, receives the 'Star Trio' from Allan and David Llewelyn Jones.

A medal hand-over ceremony took place at Barry War Museum recently in which the medals of a Vale hero were officially handed back to the town.

In January this year, The GEM told the story of Lieutenant Charles R Froom whose medals were being auctioned in Suffolk.

The son of John William and Harriet Froom of Glebe House, Victoria Park, Cadoxton, Lieutenant Froom was educated at Cadoxton School and Barry County School, and served with the 8th South Wales Borderers.

He survived the First World War, later living in Gloucestershire, but his brother Joseph, aged 23, was killed in February, 1915.

Lieutenant Froom's 1915 'Star Trio' was purchased by local businessman Allan Jones, the managing director of a timber company.

Even Allan is in the dark as to how the medals left Gloucestershire and ended up in an auctioneers in Suffolk.

He told The GEM: "I think the medals are part of the town's heritage and I made a successful bid of £220.

"They belong to the town of Barry and I wanted them to stay here as a tribute to the men who never came back."

Allan and his son David Llewelyn, aged eight, a member of the 5th Barry Sea Scouts, presented the 'Star Trio' to Glenn Booker chairman of the Barry at War group which manages the museum located at Barry Island Train Station.

Glenn said: "Allan and David's donation of the medals is very kind. We are undertaking to put them on show. They will be used in a 'show and tell' way and won't be put in a drawer."

It means that visitors to the museum will be able to see the collection close up and learn a bit more about Lieutenant Froom and the First World War.

Brilliant Foodbank volunteers warmly praised by the Vale AM

VOLUNTEERS collecting donations for the Vale foodbank at Tesco were joined by AM Jane Hutt recently.

The volunteers collected donations on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and Christmas is a particularly busy time for the foodbank.

The Vale AM commented: "The food-bank and the volunteers do such brilliant work. They are working to ensure local children and their families can access help this Christmas and throughout the year.

"They are very grateful for anything you can afford to donate." Ms Hutt also visited Barry Comprehensive School to congratulate it on significant improvement they have made according to a recent Estyn report.

She heard about recent fundraising efforts by pupils in aid of the charity Help Lanka and to help fund the school's rugby tour to Spain next year.

Ken reaches roof of the world for Bridge2Aid

by GEM REPORTER

Ken at the memorial to those who lost their lives in last year's avalanche.

VALE dentist Ken Chow has completed the trip of a lifetime – all the way to Everest Base Camp at 17,600 feet – and raised more than £5,000 for Bridge2Aid, a charity training health workers to carry out dental work in Tanzania.

Ken (34) a popular member of Barry RFC and manager of the club's second team, took part in a 14 day trek to and from Everest Base Camp.

He explained: "I flew out to Nepal on November 5 and arrived there the next day.

"We stayed in Kathmandu for a day. It was hectic, busy, chaotic and fun. Very different from what we're used to back home and a real eye-opener.

"The next day we began our hike – around four hours – from Lukla to another village Phakbing. It was an undulating path rather like one if you were hiking in Britain."

Ken was part of a group which comprised 34 hikers, two team leaders, a doctor, and five local guides who operated as porters too.

He began to get a flavour of the country – seeing farmers at work, children going to school, porters carrying equipment and supplies, and yaks and donkeys transporting produce from one village to another.

Ken said: "We saw Everest as early as day one which was brilliant. It was inspiring and gave us the incentive to carry on even though it was tough."

The next day the group made its way to Namchi Bazar, the biggest settlement on the Everest trail.

"After four to five days, the lush green valleys gave way to a landscape with boulders and snow. The temperature started to drop. Arriving at Everest Base Camp was exciting, but tinged with sadness because it was as far as I was going to go.

If people are going to make an attempt on the summit, they would normally acclimatise at base camp for a month.

During his time at base camp Ken wore five to six layers of clothing to ward off the intense cold. Physically he felt fine, although others in the party suffered.

On the way back down, he developed a heavy cold, and a bad tummy, probably due to dirty water.

One day he might be tempted to have a tilt at Everest.

"My heart says 'I want to do it one day', but then I realise it would involve learning the skill of climbing."

Ken has raised £5,395 for Bridge2 Aid. To support him with a donation, please go to:

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/KenChow2016.

VALE MP's VIEWPOINT

Poppy Appeal tells us a lot about Vale communities

THE Vale of Glamorgan is a fantastic place to live, partly because of the landscape that surrounds us, but primarily because it is a place filled with strong local communities..

The latest figures from the poppy appeal are a testament to this. The local branch of the Royal British Legion has just finished finalising their accounts for Barry, Rhoose and Peterston-Super-Ely for the poppy appeal period and have found that over £52,000 has been raised.

This compares to £43,000 at the same point last year and is more than was raised over the previous 12-month period – with more than 10-months still to go.

This is an incredible achievement for the Royal British Legion, showcasing not only the generosity of the people of the Vale, but crucially, the strength of the community.

It was the very many volunteers and community groups, collecting at supermarkets and elsewhere, who have made this possible.

Young people in the Vale were responsible for collecting over half of all the donations, with scout, guide and cadet groups relieving RBL volunteers at poppy stalls in Waitrose, Tesco, Morrisons and Asda on evenings and weekends, as well as organising their own fundraisers.

It makes me proud that the young in our community are not only so closely involved in the hugely important ceremonial act of remembrance, but play such a large role in fundraising for veterans as well.

Roy and Theresa Goodwin, who organise the poppy appeal in Barry, deserve huge credit for getting youth groups involved and for their work managing so many other local volunteers.

Just one youth group, the 11th Barry Sea Scouts, run by community champion Brian Foley, raised and collected over £10,000 in the run-up to Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday.

Those like Brian, who organise community groups, create what social scientists call 'social capital'.

Social capital is a misleading phrase, as it suggests that the positive impact of bringing people together in communities is somehow quantifiable and controllable.

It is not.

The impact of scout groups, churches, clubs, small shops, cafes and pubs is both profound and unmeasurable.

These local institutions, often not consciously designed for the purpose, create bonds between people which improve the lives of everybody in an area.

This creates not only the readily available network of people able to help with good causes such as the poppy appeal, but also the goodwill between people that is just not found to the same extent in metropolitan areas.

It is why I love the Vale.

Vale MP Alun Cairns reports to GEM readers

Oak Field pupils prep for Santa!

AT Oak Field Primary School, the children from the nursery have been 'super busy' preparing for Santa's arrival!

The children have made beautiful star decorations to put on the tree in the entrance foyer. As they decorated the tree, they made a special wish to ask the man with the sack for something special to be put under their trees at home. ***ND***

Schoolboy Jacob saw his chance to aid charity!

SCHOOLBOY Jacob Rimron 'saw' the need to raise funds for Children in Need and came up with this ingenious idea.

Observing that old trees and branches had been cut down in his garden, he decided to give them a new lease of life and make some festive animals, then sold them at school **– raising over £200 for the charity.**

'Please give me a home!'

THIS week's Dog of the Week at Dogs Trust Bridgend, is Sidney, an 11-month-old Border Collie, very clever and active, who needs to live in an experienced Collie home.

He will need plenty of off-lead exercise to burn off his energy in an adult only home with no visiting young children.

If you are interested in Sidney, you will need to make multiple visits at the centre to build up a bond, For more information please call 01656 725219, or visit the website.

Dogs Trust Bridgend has its Christmas Fair on Sunday, December 11 at Court Colman Hotel in Bridgend, CF31 4NG, between 11am and 3pm; over 20 Christmas gift stalls, Santa's grotto for children, festive games, and refreshments.

Emotional talk on the horrors of war

THE president outlined future Cadoxton WI events, including an invitation from Dinas Powys WI to its December meeting/party.

The Link carol service will take place on December 8 at 7pm at Cadoxton Methodist Church, with refreshments in the church hall afterwards.

The speaker for the evening was Mrs. Lynne Oliver, who talked about World War One and her family.

Lynne had found a copy of her late grandmother's obituary and discovered that there had been an uncle who had died in the First World War.

Lynne then went on to research family history and her findings were very emotional. She gave us an insight into the horrors that the men endured.

The raffles were won by Eileen Bishop and Marilyn Dowling.

Meetings are held on the Monday every month at 7pm in Victoria Park Community Centre; contact 01446 404891 for further information.

The District Governor pops in with a pep talk at the Barry Rotary Club...

President Robin Pitcher, new member Judith Hunt and District Governor Steve Jenkins.

ROTARY'S District 1150 Governor Steve Jenkins was the special guest at a recent dinner meeting of Barry Rotary Club at the Glenbrook Inn.

Speaking to members and guests after dinner, Steve shared his views on Rotary.

He went on to speak of the many projects Rotary are engaged in locally, nationally and internationally, and how these projects give members an opportunity to make a difference and to change lives by helping those less fortunate.

As well as asking all Rotarians to encourage new people – men and women – to join Rotary to continue the good work and enjoy the fellowship that is such an important part of membership, he was delighted to induct Mrs Judith Hunt as a full member of the club.

Barry president Robin Pitcher warmly thanked Steve for a most interesting talk; part of a very busy autumn for the Barry club, who organised the 43rd Annual Fireworks Fiesta on Barry Island on November 5, followed by a successful International Lunch later in November to raise money for the Haiti hurricane disaster.

The club also supported the Dickensian evening in Dinas Powys and will be holding a carol concert for the residents at Golau Caredig on Monday, December 19.

The Rotary Club of Barry also continues to support the Vale Foodbank with monthly donations of food and helped with the collecting of food at Tesco, Barry during the first weekend in December.

Barry Rotarians are part of an international organization with a million members worldwide, forming a global network of business, professional and community volunteers.

The Rotary Club meets weekly in the Glenbrook Inn on Thursdays (6pm for 6.30pm).

For further information, contact club secretary Phil Hunt on 01446 720000 or online at *www.ribi.org*.

EMERGENCY DENTAL WORK

AS was reported in last week's GEM, the Denture Design Centre in the Crosby Yard Industrial Estate, Wildmill, Bridgend, will be operating an emergency dental repair morning over the Christmas break.

However, the correct date is Thursday, December 29, 10am until noon. For more information, call the laboratory number (01656 767806).

MP visits local delivery office

Vale MP and Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns visited his local delivery office in Llandow to pass on season's greetings to its staff.

Countdown to festive concert

The Tabernacl Music Society's choir.

TABERNACL Music Society's Christmas concert will be held on December 16 at Capel y Tabernacle, Derwen Road, Bridgend at 7pm.

The choir and musical director Matthew Nash will welcome back the RAF St Athan Voluntary Band, conducted by Alan Bourne, to present a programme of music to suit all tastes.

In addition to traditional and modern carols, the programme includes 'Gloria' and 'Candlelight' (John Rutter), 'Fantasia on Christmas Carols' (Vaughan Williams), 'Walking in the Air' (Howard Blake), two Christmas Spirituals (arr. Malcolm Sargent) and two new pieces written especially for the choir, 'Newyddion Da' by Kevin Adams, former musical director of the choir, and 'Bitter Song' by Richard Logan, who sings with the bass section.

Also taking part, are popular youth choirs, Da Capo and Crescendo, who are part of Kenfig Hill and District Male Voice Choir. In 2014 Crescendo recorded their first album 'Cana O Dy Galon' in the Ty Cerdd recording studios at the Millennium Centre, Cardiff. Tickets £10, from choir members or at the door.

Vale MP: 'Riding schools under threat'

HIGHER business rates are not only a threat to high streets, it is also a threat to rural enterprises such as horse riding schools according to the British Horse Riding Society and Vale MP Alun Cairns.

Alun Cairns with Sarah Phillips at the Argae House Riding School near Dinas Powys.

The British Horse Society invited Mr Cairns to discuss the issue at the Argae House Riding School near Dinas Powys. Sarah Phillips, director of the society in Wales, explained to Mr Cairns that hundreds of riding schools may close due to higher rates.

The periodic re-valuation of business rates has become an important local issue across the country, with many small businesses expecting to see their costs increase. The new rateable values, and thus new rates, will come into effect from April next year.

Mrs Phillips said: "The percentage increase in rateable value for riding schools and livery yards is considerably more than the average increase for all businesses in the same region.

"There is often an assumption that all those involved with horses are wealthy, this is most certainly not the case. Many families have invested all they have in their small riding school businesses, and now face going bust.

"I know of many riding schools that are already closing in anticipation of the higher rates."

Mr Cairns said: "It is not only High Streets that lose out as a result of higher rates. I am very concerned about the impact on other rural enterprises such as riding schools and equestrian centres.

"These businesses are an important part of rural life, and a vital part of the rural economy."

Mr Cairns said he was lobbying the Welsh Government to establish a more generous rate-relief package, similar to the scheme that will be available in England from the start of April next year.

He said: "In England, from April, businesses with a rateable value below £12,000 will pay no business rates, and those with a value up to £18,000 will have their rates significantly reduced. I would like to see the Welsh Government follow suit to protect important small businesses, such as equestrian centres, here in Wales."

Ty Hafan decks castle walls not with holly, but Snowdogs at charity gig

A SING-ALONG under the stars, fireworks and a pack of giant snowdogs kicked off the festive season at Tŷ Hafan's 'Carols in the Castle'.

More than 2,800 partygoers enjoyed performances from singers Richie Jones and Russell Jones, Bryncoch Choir, Superchoir and Britain's Got Talent 2015 finalists Mel and Jamie at Cardiff Castle.

Sponsored by One Stop and presented by Heart DJs Jagger and Woody, the event took place against the backdrop of the castle, complete with a hog roast dinner, snow machine, donkeys and a Christmas market, and ended with a firework display.

The event also included the launch of Tŷ Hafan's biggest ever campaign, Snowdogs: Tails in Wales.

This 'public art' trail across Cardiff will see 1.5m tall sculptures – based on the much-loved animated film The Snowman and the Snowdog – placed at landmarks and open spaces all across the city next autumn.

The launch saw a pack of Snowdog sculptures scampering around the castle battlements, including one designed by Gren's son Darryl Jones, complete with rugby pitch and sheep, a candy-striped version with intricate sketches by artist Lowri Davies and another painted with handprints by staff and children at the hospice.

'Snowdogs' at the concert.

Each snowdog will be sponsored and auctioned off at the end of the campaign.

Sara Webber, general manager, marketing, communications and events at Tŷ Hafan, said: "It was great fun to have a sing-along under the stars with all our favourite carols and enjoy good food and a spot of Christmas shopping at the stalls.

"The amazing fireworks at the end of the night really made the most of the stunning scenery of the castle.

"But the highlight of the night for me was spotting the snowdog sculptures around the castle as we launched our exciting campaign – I can't wait to see them taking over Cardiff's streets, parks and buildings next year," Sara added.

Belting out the Christmas classics at the Ty Hafan concert.

Penarth Ramblers explore the local sights in the Vale

A GROUP of 11 walkers and Pepper the spaniel joined Joy from Penarth and District Ramblers at Eastbrook Station for a linear walk through the delightful Vale.

Heading up through houses a journey through fields with views to Llandough led them up to Penyturnpike Wood, then down through Casehill Wood to walk beside the Cadoxton brook and up through Michaelston-le-Pit via Cwrt-yr-Ala Road.

With misty views through the Michaelston valley towards Garth Hill and navigating their way under some fallen trees in the wood, the open Cwm Slade led them on towards Wenvoe village. Circumnavigating the new housing development and following the lane from Burdonshill towards Wenvoe Castle, upon reaching Goldsland Farm and entering fields, a wooden footbridge led them across the brook for the short climb up to Port Road.

After lunching in a quiet field and passing through the Cardiff and Glamorgan Memorial Park and Crematorium, two walkers left to walk back to Barry whilst the remainder continued downhill on a path adjacent to Pencoedtre Wood.

Arriving at Lidl, five walkers and Pepper made their escape to tramp back to Dinas Powys, while the remaining five continued through Gilbert Lane and across Pencoedtre fields to make their way to the simple but lovely Old Village Church in Cadoxton, dedicated to St Cadoc for a look inside, as it was open. Then climbing uphill and through Victoria Park a short walk downhill led them back to the finishing point at Cadoxton Railway Station.

Only three walkers, including newcomer David joined Pam and Krys at Radyr Station before tramping through Junction Terrace, the first street to be built in the area to house workers following the coming of the railways.

Entering Radyr Woods, once part of Radyr Court's walled deer park, they followed pathways to a railway bridge, then a riverside path to Llandaff North bridge to cross the River Taff and join part of the Taff Trail. At Hailey Park which was named after the family who gifted the land to the council, lots of young people were playing rugby and, passing beneath a disused railway bridge, they moved on to the Melingriffith Water Pump.

In 1749, the Melingriffith Tinplate Works at Radyr used water from the River Taff which passed down the Melingriffith feeder stream and the water pump was designed to lift water from the bottom of the feeder back into the Glamorgan Canal, the group's next port of call. Opened in 1794 for the transportation of iron goods from Merthyr Tydfil to the port of Cardiff, the only remaining part of the canal is now home to birds, plants and insects, along with visitors who enjoy the peace and tranquillity.

Joining a road then woodland paths beside the River Taff and making their way past the new Radyr hydro scheme, which uses river water to power turbines attached to a generator to provide electricity, a footbridge led them back to their start.

On December 10, meet at Redbrink Crescent, Barry Island for an 11-mile moderate walk taking in the Barry beaches, Rhoose Point and Porthkerry Park; contact Joy on 01446 737131.

On December 14, meet at 9am at Cogan Leisure Centre for a nine-mile easy walk taking in the two Severn Bridges in south Gloucestershire; contact William on 07528 701 952.

Contact the walk leader for any advice. Programmes and membership advice can be obtained from Pam on 029 2025 5102.

JOY STRANGWARD

'A SUNDAY MORNING RAMBLE IS GOOD FOR YOUR ELF'

ON Sunday, a wonderfully crisp winter walk by Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers was led by Bill and John from Cowbridge to Aberthin, Prisk, Trerhyngyll, and Pen-y-Lan, returning to Cowbridge from the west.

It was a bright sunny day and we encountered a great variety of equine friends in the open fields enjoying the glorious weather. Once again, we used our Pathwatch apps to report some problematic stiles.

Many thanks to the Ramblers for this very useful device. Back to Cowbridge for refreshments where we saw an astounding assortment of Santas and elves biking through the town in all their finery.

If you are interested in walking, do come and join us. See our website for contact details: www.valeofglamorganramblers.co.uk. You can also visit and like our Facebook page for notifications.

Our next walk on Sunday, December 11 will be at Dimbath and Ogwr Fach, meeting at Cowbridge Town Hall Carpark at 9am. **JB**

Go to **The GEM** for the latest stories and breaking news...
www.glamorgan-gem.co.uk

After 36 years, Mo and Glyn tie the knot at Marie Curie

A COUPLE, who have been in a relationship for nearly four decades, finally tied the knot in front of family and friends.

But Maureen and Glyn Davies didn't book a church for their long awaited nuptials. Instead the pair, from Penarth, gathered with their loved ones at the Marie Curie – Cardiff and the Vale hospice in the town, a spokeswoman reported.

Mo and Glyn – known as Bryn to his family and friends – became husband and wife (after 35 years of living together) in the hospice's newly refurbished day therapy unit, looking out onto the coast.

Glyn had been staying at the hospice, which provides 24-hour expert care and support for those living with a terminal illness, to receive symptom control for his prostate cancer, which he has been living with since 2012.

When someone told them it was possible to get married there, they jumped at the chance, and within hours the date was set.

Maureen, who turned 75 just days before walking down the aisle, spoke of when the pair met 36 years ago.

"We met in a club called Scaramoush. I never used to go clubbing, but this one night, a friend said to me, 'Come on, we'll go out', and that's where I met him. He was such a nice guy.

"The first night we went out together, we just went for a meal and he dropped me at home."

It wasn't long until the pair moved in together, but it would take Glyn quite a while to get a ring on Maureen's finger.

"We were planning to get married anyway, for different reasons, for pension and stuff like that, so that Mo would not have to go searching around for money," said Glyn, 72.

Maureen added: "He's wanted to get married before, but I wasn't ready having gone through a divorce.

"He's marvellous; I would not get anyone like him. He's the most trustworthy and honest man you could ever meet.

ABOVE: Maureen and Glyn on their special day.

"He's so honest, gentle and very thoughtful. There's nothing bad I could say about him. My children feel the same, and look up to him as their dad – in fact, they call him dad."

Speaking of when he was diagnosed, Glyn said: "I'd had a niggling pain in the bottom of my back. I thought I'd go down the doctors and get it checked over Christmas and I went to the Heath (University of Wales Hospital, Cardiff).

"She said it could be cancer, sent me for a test, and it came back that it was.

"The progression has been quite slow. It's taken four years to go from a slight niggly ache to anything worse, so that's not too bad, I can't expect any more than that."

Glyn said that he'd never wanted to have to use the services at the Marie Curie hospice, but that since being an inpatient, he's been pleasantly surprised at the upbeat atmosphere.

"It's absolutely brilliant, I can't fault it," he said.

Maureen said the care Glyn has received could not be better.

"They have been so supportive, giving me cups of tea and plenty of support. We're both happy with the care and how they look after him, nothing is too much for any of the staff," she added.

Glyn said it was only recently that he'd found out his own father had died of prostate cancer – but that he was doing all he could to pass information on to his own son.

"I've made sure that my son knew all about prostate cancer, how to keep on top of it, get PSA tests (a blood test that can detect the early signs of an enlarged prostate) and look after himself," he said.

Following the marriage, the couple cut one of two cakes they had – one made by staff at the hospice – and enjoyed a buffet with their guests.

The couple thanked all the staff at the hospice for helping on their special day.

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COWBRIDGE CHARITY LUNCH AT THE BEAR RAISES £14,000 FOR VELINDRE

AN annual event that has become a highly popular date in the Vale calendar raised a magnificent £14,000 for the Velindre Hospital charity appeal at The Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, organised by delighted owners Julian and Esther Hitchcock.

Among the special guests present at The charity/auction lunch on Friday, December 2, were Welsh rugby celebrities and Velindre 'Ambassadors', Jonathan Davies and Martyn Williams, pictured below with WRU chairman Gareth Davies.

ABOVE: There was entertainment from Owen Money.

ALL PICTURES ON THIS PAGE BY MIKE WILCOCK

GLADSTONE PUPILS FILL 145 GIFT SHOEBOXES FOR CHARITY

THE festive season is truly under way at Gladstone Primary School, with concerts and parties planned during the next two weeks.

However, as well as celebrating, children and staff at Gladstone demonstrated the true meaning of Christmas by donating a staggering 145 filled shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child appeal this year.

The collection van arrived in the school yard last Tuesday and was greeted by the whole school forming a human chain to transport the boxes from the school hall and safely into the van. Led by teacher Sarah Creasey, the children counted each box as they were loaded.

Ms Creasey said: "Once again, we are blown away by the generosity of our Gladstone families. Thanks to those who donated, we will bring pleasure to 145 children in other parts of the world."

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£22,175 share-out for Vale groups

EIGHTEEN sports clubs and organisations from across the Vale of Glamorgan have recently benefited from a share of Community Chest awards totalling £22,175 to help them develop existing, or create new, sporting opportunities in the Vale.

Barry Squash Club was one of the organisations chosen to receive funding; they will develop squash opportunities for women and girls in Barry.

Engaging more girls in sports and physical activity is one of the priority areas for the Vale Council's sports and play development team, who hope to link this new squash opportunity to their 'Girls on the Move' programme, which has recently seen Glowminton successfully increase female participation in sport.

372 (Barry) Squadron Air Training Corps are also hoping to attract more females to take part in activity.

They were awarded funding to increase the number of cadets playing hockey, with a focus on increasing female participation.

Another priority area in the Vale is the development of opportunities for disabled people.

The Intersensory Club runs cycling sessions twice a week for disabled people, both of which take place at Jenner Park Stadium, Barry.

They have adapted bicycles that can be used by members of the public, and have received funding to buy more bicycles to help include people with autism.

Coaching and umpiring education is also a priority for the Community Chest panel, which has awarded funding to a number of clubs in order to enable them to send their volunteers on training courses, including: first aid, child protection training, and umpiring/refereeing courses.

The clubs that benefited from funding for coaching and umpiring training include: Wenvoe Colts FC, Old Penarthians RFC, Barry Basketball Club, Hen Goleg League of Friends, Cowbridge Hockey Club, Vale Cricket Club, Cowbridge RFC Mini & Junior Section, Penarth Cricket Club, Vale Vipers Basketball and Penarth Town AFC.

The other clubs successful in receiving funding during this round of the Community Chest scheme were: Great Western Cricket Club, Llantwit Major Tennis Club, Glamorgan Anglers, Peterston Junior FC and Barry YMCA Male Artistic Club.

The Community Chest scheme is funded by Sport Wales and managed locally by the Vale Council's sports and play development team.

The final round for Community Chest funding for this financial year will take place on February 2, with the deadline for submitting applications being January 19.

Any club or organisation interested in applying for funding is requested to contact the sports and play development team first, to check that their project is eligible for funding.

The Community Chest scheme contributes to the council's objectives of increasing health and wellbeing among its residents, and increasing skills and education.

To find out further information contact the sports and play development team on 01446 704793.

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Dog foul bags abandoned on park land

Abandoned bags of dog foul.

A resident of The Pastures in Barry has complained about the amount of dog refuse bags that have been abandoned nearby.

In the park land area bordering Whitewell Road, bags with dogs' mess have been left strewn on the ground.

The resident said: "It has happened in a couple of areas. It is disgusting – and I think if people had Christmas visitors who went for a walk, they would be disgusted, too."

When The GEM visited the area, one walker said bins had been removed and that had possibly led to people abandoning their bags.

The GEM approached the Vale Council and a spokesman said the area was not an adopted highway and was the responsibility of Persimmon Homes.

A spokesman for Persimmon Homes East Wales said: *"The litter bins were removed from the development because, unfortunately, they were being abused by dog owners depositing their waste. Dog waste is classed as contaminated waste and is not only dangerous, but also expensive to dispose of.*

"We are continuing to seek a transfer of the green space from our ownership to the council, at which point we will reinstate the bins."

ADVERTISING FEATURE

WITH CHRISTMAS IN MIND, WHY NOT TAKE A SHOPPING TRIP TO THE MINT?

GIFT shoppers searching for inspiration or something a little bit special this Christmas will be delighted to know of a unique new shopping experience in south Wales.

The spacious shop at The Royal Mint Experience, The Royal Mint's new visitor attraction in Llantrisant, offers an enticing range of gifts from collectable coins to books and chocolate coins – perfect presents or stocking fillers for family and friends of all ages.

A Royal Mint spokeswoman said: "Particularly popular this Christmas is that well known bunny, Peter Rabbit.

"The limited edition Beatrix Potter character gift set contains commemorative 50p coins featuring Peter and friends Mrs Tiggy Winkle, Squirrel Nutkin and Jemima Puddleduck.

"The Beatrix Potter coins caused a stir when they were launched individually this year, and the silver editions sold out in record time. The circulating editions are the most highly sought after 50p pieces in people's pockets and purses this year.

"The UKs first commemorative Christmas coin features a festive nativity scene and is proving to be another strong favourite.

"No Christmas would be complete without chocolate coins – which can be found here in the shape of a giant chocolate £1, or a selection of chocolate coins encased in a piggy bank.

"Visitors can seize a chance to book a 'Royal Mint Experience' factory tour during their visit, or simply relax and enjoy a cup of festive hot chocolate in the bright and airy café. Families can take advantage of a range of free activities all through December too.

"Those who can't make it to The Royal Mint Experience in person might like to take a look at The Royal Mint Christmas online shop."

The Royal Mint has an unbroken history of minting British coinage dating back over 1,000 years.

By the late 13th century it was based in the Tower of London, and remained there for over 500 years.

By 1812, The Royal Mint had moved out of the Tower to premises on London's Tower Hill. In 1967, the building of a new Royal Mint began on its current site in south Wales.

There were estimated to be 28.9 billion UK coins in circulation on March 31, 2014 ,with a total face value of over £4 billion, all manufactured by The Royal Mint. In total, nearly 2 billion UK coins were issued during 2013-14.

The Royal Mint has been making official military campaign medals since it was commissioned to make awards for soldiers who fought in the battle of Waterloo in 1815.

The year 2012 was of particular significance for The Royal Mint's medal-making team, with the manufacture of all 4,700 Victory Medals for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

LEFT: *This year's Nativity coin.*

ABOVE: *The new shop at The Royal Mint in Llantrisant.*

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Bleed For This takes you 12 rounds

BOXING films seem to be a common thread in the world of cinema; if Rocky proved to be the breakthrough all those years ago, since then all manner of tales, both true and fictional, set in the ring have found their way to the big screen.

The latest is *Bleed For This*, the story of boxer Vinny Pazienza (Miles Teller), who is a classic underdog, battling his way to success against all the odds alongside his trainer Kevin Rooney (Aaron Eckhart). However, after landing a world title, Vinny finds himself in a car crash that leaves him with a broken neck. With no guarantee that he will be able to even walk again, Vinny begins a long journey to full fitness – but will he be able to return to the sport he loves?

As well as being popular, boxing films tend to follow a similar trajectory – success, followed by disaster before an against-all-odds triumph leaves the film on a high note. *Bleed For This* doesn't deviate from this path (in fact, it treads a path that cleaves very close indeed to this) but what it does do is instil in itself a sense of personality and character that makes it hugely watchable and very captivating.

It's led by Miles Teller's performance in the lead role; Vinny is a scrappy boxer, whose passion and determination takes him far, as well as a personality and character that makes him more interesting than your average pugilist (he memorably arrives at a weigh-in early on wearing only a gown and a posing pouch), and Teller infuses his performance with these elements to make for an enthralling lead performance.

While his cocksure personality gives way to more inward stoicism post-accident, he becomes no less engaging, and Teller's ability to convey both sides of

by GARETH JAMIESON
Follow Screen Talk on Twitter – @GEMScreenTalk

Pazienza's story (as well as a physical commitment to the role) means he shines brightly.

He shares a superb chemistry with Aaron Eckhart, who brings added depth to the role of grizzled trainer. Both Eckhart's Kevin and Vinny have something to prove, and if their relationship takes time to get going, their connection engages, with the former impressing nearly as much as Teller.

Around them are some fine character actors given material to get stuck into, in particular Ciaran Hinds as Vinny's omnipresent father and Katey Sagal as his nervy mother, which makes this a very well-acted film with believable characters you can root for.

The film is written and directed by Ben Younger, who's been unable to match the achievements of his underrated debut *Boiler Room* way back in 2000, but who shows an understated confidence here.

Certainly he doesn't attempt to reinvent this genre of film, and plays by the rules too closely at times (there are elements of *The Fighter* in Vinny's familial relationships, while *Million Dollar Baby*'s emotional wallop lingers at times) but he gives the story and its characters depth and dimension that allow you to forgive this.

Similarly, his direction is understated and grittily shot (the car accident is bluntly filmed with no recourse to melodrama) but it suits the mood and feel of the film well.

It's a story that feels like it's been told before – but its the personality and depth afforded to *Bleed For This* that elevates it above its genre foundations, and is a triumph for both Younger and his cast, in particular Miles Teller.

VERDICT: A boxing film that takes you 12 rounds, *Bleed For This* outstrips its slightly-predictable story arc to make for something wholly captivating. Ben Younger's script and direction are unfussy and told straight, while the performances, especially Miles Teller's bruised central turn, are immensely watchable. *Recommended*.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *The Fighter* (2010), *Million Dollar Baby* (2004).

Barry's radio hams celebrate

BARRY Amateur Radio Society recently celebrated the club's 50th anniversary at a dinner at the Sully Social and Sports Club, where the club has been based for many years.

Club chairman, Glyn Jones, is pictured cutting the anniversary cake.

Ice Central rink hailed a 'huge success'

THE Vale of Glamorgan Council's Ice Central has been hailed a huge success after more than 4,000 people got their skates on during the nine-day event.

A total of 4,166 took to the ice as the highlight of the Council's winter program proved hugely popular.

It was Barry's first-ever ice rink, located adjacent to the Town Hall, and many skating sessions sold out, far surpassing organisers' expectations.

Gates opened at Ice Central on Saturday, November 25 after the festive illuminations came to life in King Square.

It remained there until last Sunday, offering seasonal food, drinks, live music and a family-friendly skating experience.

Coun Lis Burnett, cabinet member for regeneration and education, said: "A lot of work went on behind the scenes at Ice Central. We are delighted that effort has paid off and the event proved such a resounding success. Barry got its first-ever ice rink and Vale residents really responded to it, the whole of King Square area was buzzing. We will now explore the possibility of making Ice Central even bigger and better next year."

John Davies, director of operations for rink suppliers 11th-hour Events, said: "I feel for a first real ice rink in Barry this has far surpassed our expectations. Needless to say we consider Barry to be a huge success.

"We were pretty much sold out on all evening and weekend sessions. All our staff worked incredibly hard to process the bookings and tickets, exchange skates and shoes, and also to maintain the ice surface for skaters to enjoy.

"Many people returned and returned and we soon got to know our regular customers. We thank them for their support and for making the event such a success. We feel that Ice Central has a huge potential to grow and expand."

Standing in the rain from 3am at Cardiff Airport is a labour of love

ABOVE: Geoff and grand-daughter Olivia meet a Chuckle Brother at the ceremony.

A WIDOWER who promised his wife that he would carry on her volunteering work for a Penarth hospice has been recognised for his dedication to the cause.

Geoff Mortimer lost his wife Jenny to cancer eight years ago and before she died, he promised Jenny he would continue the work she had done as part of the Marie Curie Llantwit Major fundraising group. Since then, he has jumped at the chance of fundraising anywhere in the area – even at Cardiff Airport in the early hours of the morning.

Geoff's dedication has now been marked with a Peacock Award for Fundraising Volunteer of the Year for his hard work.

Geoff, who has lost eight stone and stopped drinking alcohol at home since he began volunteering, said: "I was very humbled actually. I thoroughly enjoyed being at the awards evening and the round of applause I got was unbelievable.

"A number of people came up to me after the award presentation asking me how I did it, and wanted to clone me! But I do 25 to 30 hours a week, because I can. If someone can do two hours a week, then we say "thank you, that's great". I have got so much time on my hands to be able to do these things, and I enjoy myself. My family were very proud."

Geoff struggled after Jenny died and received counselling at the hospice, which he found extremely helpful. Volunteering for the charity, Geoff began as a collector, which gave him a new lease of life and as time passed by, his confidence grew. He then became a patient feedback volunteer.

Sharing the secrets of his success at raising more than £20,000 so far this year – and around £50,000 in total over seven years – Geoff said: "It's not the money that's important, but the fact that the funds raised this year can provide 1,000 hours of nursing care.

"I dress in yellow from top to bottom, including my underwear and socks. I collect up at Cardiff Airport in departures, and have collected £8,000 there," he said. "One guy said he had to come and give me something for being there at three in the morning dressed like that – and he put a tenner in the bucket. I'm there from 3am to 2pm.

"If I see a family of two kids and two adults, I'll wave at the kids first. If they wave back, I'll put my hand up to do a high five and they will come running over. Then the parents come over because they want to see what's going on, and I'll get some money in the bucket."

Geoff, who volunteers between 25 and 30 hours a week, said: "I just thoroughly enjoy myself, it's not a chore for me, I just love to get out to talking to people, the spin-off then is the money I have raised. I just throw everything at it. It's amazing how I manage, my calendar is all over the place and I don't double book things.

Community fundraiser Georgina Burke, who nominated Geoff, said: "Geoff is someone who will always respond with a "yes please" if asked to do a daffodil collection in the cold and rain!

"Geoff is passionate about the vision of Marie Curie – a better life for people and their families living with a terminal illness, and demonstrates this in how he speaks to supporters and patients.

"Having had the excellent care first hand, he understands what a difficult time it can be for families and will do anything to help."

Nightmare traffic in Llandough

I WORK in Llandough Hospital and sometimes drive in. The amount of traffic at peak times is absolutely awful.

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What's on and where?

WI craft fayre

PENLLYN and District WI hold their Christmas Craft Fayre in the Lesser Hall, Cowbridge, on December 6; doors open at 10am.

Gifts, cakes, jewellery, raffles, Christmas decorations and refreshments available throughout the day.

Valeways walks

ON Saturday, December 10, at 10.30am, 'Nature Reserve, Coastal Path and Pier' (seven miles), starting at Cosmeston Country Park outside the cafe.

On Sunday, December 11 at 2.30pm, 'A Christmas Cracker', starting outside Turner House Gallery, Penarth.

On Tuesday, December 13 at 1.30pm, 'Wind and Water', starting at the Old Harbour car park, Barry Island.

On Wednesday, December 14 at 10.30am, Barry Coffee Shop Strollers meet at Romilly Cafe, Cold Knap.

Also on December 14 at 2.30pm, the Cowbridge Coffee Shop Strollers meet at the Physic Garden fountain.

History talk

A TALK will be given at the Penarth Local History Society tonight (Thursday, December 8) by Ron Powell on 'Lincoln to Tokyo – 32 Years In the RAF'.

There is a change of venue for this talk only: it will be held in All Saints' main hall, Penarth (next to the Lesser Hall). All welcome, it begins at 7.30pm.

Library Friends

THE Friends of Penarth Library are feeling festive and are holding a Christmas cake sale on Saturday, December 10, from 10am to 12 noon at Penarth Library. Please come along and support your local library.

AM's surgery

VALE AM Jane Hutt will hold a surgery in Dinas Powys on Saturday, December 10 between 10am – 11am at Murchfield Hall, Sunnycroft Lane (CF64 4QQ).

No appointment necessary.

Dyfan Councillors' surgery

DYFAN Councillors Anthony Powell and Claire Curtis will hold their monthly councillors' advice surgery on Saturday, December 10 at Highlight Park Community Centre from 10am to 11am.

No appointment is necessary.

Remembering loved ones

THE minister and members are inviting local people to a special Service of Remembering on Sunday, December 11 at 3pm in Saint David's Methodist Church, Winston Road, Barry.

Rev Peter Taylor said: "The short service will be quiet and reflective, giving an opportunity to recall, honour and give thanks for loved ones who have died; while holding those who mourn in the love and strength of God. We know that Christmas can bring many memories and emotions for those who mourn."

The service will include the reading out of the names of those who have died (in church and community) during the past two years, and whose funerals have been conducted by Methodist ministers in the Barry section of the Vale Methodist circuit.

Names of those who have died in other years can also be read out.

For more information, contact Rev Peter Taylor on 01446 406262; or revpete@live.co.uk.

Carols at Lavernock

THE former St Lawrence Church at Fort Road, Lavernock will host a candlelit hour of carols, readings and poems at 3 pm on Sunday, December 11.

There will be a warm welcome for all who attend. The service will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Marconi Inn across the road.

Free parking on the left of Fort Road just before the church; enquiries to Rev Margaret Stark on 029 20701303.

Author's book signing

JOIN the Griffin Books team for an afternoon of Murder, Mistletoe and Mince Pies on Tuesday, December 13 at All Saints' Church in Penarth.

Crime writer Belinda Bauer, whose 2014 Cardiff-set novel *Rubbernecker* won the Theakston's Crime Novel of the Year award, will be discussing her latest book *The Beautiful Dead* and answering questions.

Tickets £10 each include seasonal refreshments and a discount on book purchases. Doors open at 2pm for a 2.30pm start; call 02920 706455 to reserve your place.

Tenovus Lovelight Service

LLANTWIT Major Friends of Tenovus will hold their annual Lovelight Service on Tuesday, December 13 at 7.30pm at St Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major.

A spokeswoman said: "This service presents an opportunity to give thanks for our loved ones: we light a candle in love, honour or in memory of someone we love; celebrate a new life, ask for a blessing, give thanks for a healing.

"We have been holding this service for over 25 years with tremendous support from the community; we look forward to seeing you all.

"Join us in listening to St Illtyd's Primary School choir, enjoy mulled wine and mince pies."

Big Screen

BIG Screen's next film this season is *Our Kind of Traitor* (Cert 15) on Thursday, December 15, at 7.30pm in the Town Hall, Cowbridge.

Perry and girlfriend Gail are caught between the Russian Mafia and the British Secret Service in this film, written by John Le Carré, with a cast that includes Ewan McGregor, Naomie Harris and Damian Lewis.

Doors open 7.10pm, tickets £4 available in advance from the town clerk's office or on the door.

Sale in Dinas Powys

DINAS Powys Voluntary Concern (DPVC) are holding a table top sale on Saturday, December 17 at Murchfield Community Centre from 10am to 2pm.

A variety of crafts from White Gecko, books from Clumsy Rabbit and gifts from Neal's Yard will be on sale as well as handmade products and bric-a-brac.

Pick up those last-minute Christmas presents and at the same time help DPVCs Minibus Appeal fund. Hot chocolate, mulled wine and mince pies will keep you warm while you browse.

Christmas services at Merthyr Dyfan

CHRISTMAS Eve: 2.30pm carol service with Christingles at Merthyr Dyfan parish church.

At 8pm the first Mass of Christmas at St Paul's hall, St Paul's Avenue.

Christmas Day: 8.45am sung Mass at Merthyr Dyfan parish church; 10.15am sung Mass at St Paul's hall, St Paul's Avenue.

Cantemus Choir's Tenovus concert

JOIN Cantemus as we return for our annual Christmas charity gala at Llandaff Cathedral on Saturday, December 17, at 7.30pm!

In aid of Tenovus Cancer Care, this is the perfect way to get in the mood for Christmas, with carols, drums, and a brass band, plus readings from Leona Vaughan of the hit comedy show *Stella* and CBBC's *Wolfblood*.

With singing that's been described as "thrilling", "incisive" and "vivacious", Cantemus is regarded as one of the leading choirs in the country.

Under the baton of our music director Huw Williams, director of music at Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, St James' Palace, we will perform a selection of beautiful Christmas pieces; some well-known, plus a few surprises. The programme will include items from our well-received Christmas CD, *Nativity*, which has featured widely on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3.

Joining us will be the Barry 'Sing with Us Choir', who'll be raising the roof with yet more festive favourites. Their zest for singing – and for life – is infectious!

Don't miss what promises to be a fantastic evening. Book your tickets now atwww.ticketsource.co.uk/cantemus-chamber-choir or via the Ticketsource telephone box office on 0333 666 3366 (£1.50 fee for telephone bookings).

ELENA RHISIART

All set for village Christmas market

START your Christmas at the Village Market's annual Christmas market and craft fair on Saturday, December 10 from 10am – 2pm in Peterston-super-Ely Church and Community Hall.

Entrance is free and you are sure to find something to interest you.

A spokeswoman said: "We have a fabulous range of craft stalls booked. As well as all our usual homemade cakes and produce, there is an expanded range of jams, jellies, chutneys and edible Christmas wares.

"We have a plant stall and a stall selling fresh Christmas decorations made by members of the Flower and Garden Club.

"There are activities to entertain the children and a lucky dip bran tub. Entertainment is provided by our primary school choir, St Peter's Handbell Ringers, followed by carol singing with our choir to get us in the festive mood, along with mince pies, mulled wine, homemade soup and hot turkey rolls."

All profits are donated to the hall towards its upkeep and further improvements.

Contact Pat Cadwalladr on 01446 760267 for any further details.

Mayor's invitation

BARRY Town Mayor, Coun Charlotte Williams, will be holding a Christmas coffee morning at St Mary's Church, Holton Road, Barry, on Monday, December 19 at 10am to 12pm to raise money for her three charities.

To book a stall selling festive items, or for more information, contact info@barrytowncouncil.gov.uk or telephone 01446 738663.

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D959.

● **£2,000:** 936003.

● **The rollover, which now stands at £7,000, was not won this week.**

● **£10:** 308180, 276443, 711428, 283821, 599616, 490862, 801720, 535641, 603477, 665878, 973829, 277616, 423750, 284013, 729322, 309949, 699839, 202334,100400, 1142120, 005526.

● **£5:** 659162, 737793, 159807, 366711, 167089, 489558, 872756, 643304, 870435, 382219, 726702, 724414, 574915, 171761, 398711, 371084, 307416, 393789, 908320, 391938, 803378, 552371, 108391, 798223, 775898, 196454, 644628, 476858, 482605, 188124, 166025, 215338, 870462, 492740, 617879, 495715, 524293, 919805, 802409, 201094, 243400, 839140, 734665, 880823, 102511, 737193, 667583, 103140, 485218, 151233, 161989, 800290, 898068, 123008, 484650, 536226, 295247, 862940, 001350.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D960.

● **£2,000:** 309183.

● **The rollover, which now stands at £9,000, was not won this week.**

● **£10:** 602944, 451964, 398203, 674894, 740702, 846478, 100615, 847264, 455852, 547743, 379013, 863528, 431188, 861069, 124772, 779891, 400037, 701513, 271555, 1142120.

● **£5:** 522534, 211905, 466110, 884907, 642146, 467957, 979410, 266842, 170921, 355017, 616630, 276239, 495000, 684786, 638704, 725294, 478496, 718829, 815572, 691997, 808666, 361853, 599811, 345620, 282974, 379316, 673493, 239866, 742311, 807850, 331338, 335971, 433456, 443310, 411265, 634098, 470391, 543336, 950999, 402859, 441870, 416538, 116885, 841760, 119444, 412749, 362310, 582832, 300522, 676811, 238135, 965154, 826243, 575721, 681726, 717695, 554888, 1960081, 1397481, 5240.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

Christmas fair for Dogs Trust

STAFF at Dogs Trust Bridgend are preparing for the arrival of 'Santa Paws' ahead of its annual Christmas fair on Sunday, December 11, and are encouraging local people to come along and join in the festive fun.

Taking place at the Court Colman Hotel (11am – 3pm) the annual event promises to be a great day out for all the family, with four-legged friends invited to join in the fun too!

Highlights of the day include a grand raffle, tombola and craft stalls. Guests will also have the chance to do some Christmas shopping for the two and four-legged family members with stalls selling stocking fillers, gifts, treats, Dogs Trust merchandise and Christmas cards.

Christmas-themed refreshments will also be available and visitors will have the chance to meet Santa 'Paws'.

Dogs Trust Bridgend supporter relations officer, Rhiannon Chamberlain said: "Our Christmas fair is always a wonderful occasion. This year promises to be a fantastic day out for all the family – including the pooches!

"All the money raised will go directly to caring for the dogs in our care so it's a wonderful way to raise pounds for homeless hounds while getting into the Christmas spirit."

Community Choir Christmas concert

BARRY Community Choir is holding a Christmas songs and carols concert at Crossways Church, Barry, on Saturday, December 10 (3pm).

For more information, go to www.barrycommunitychoir.com or call 01446 748724.

Porthcawl Minister's faith led to a fascinating life

OBITUARY – Paul Floe (1950– 2016)

THE sudden death last month of the Rev Paul Floe shocked people in Porthcawl and many other communities.

He had been the Minister in Trinity Church, Porthcawl, since 2001, and had retired only last year to Carmarthenshire.

His funeral took place in Trinity Church, and the congregation reflected on the many communities that he had touched.

From his earliest days growing up in Tiger Bay, he loved rugby, and took that enthusiasm with him throughout his ministry, wherever he was called.

A measure of this is the fact that 50 members of Lincoln Rugby Club attended the funeral in Porthcawl. Paul's ministry had taken him to Lincoln from 1987 until 2001, and he was highly regarded at the club.

So much so, in fact, that there was a memorial service in Lincoln, and another 20 Lincoln RFC members, who had been unable to get to Porthcawl on the day, joined members of Paul's congregation to pay tribute.

The GEM is grateful to Paul's family for the following tribute:

Paul was born on March 12, 1950 – a fifties child, as he was fond of saying.

He lived with his parents, Doreen and Pauline Floe in Tiger Bay, along with his two elder sisters, Doreen and Eva. Six years later they were joined by another sister, Joy. Life was hard but there was always love in the house.

The community was close and everyone knew everyone. Paul's claim to fame was that Shirley Bassey pushed him in his pram. He would often recall going to 'the Mission' to Sunday School.

When Paul was five the family moved to Ely. A near neighbour was the captain of the Boys' Brigade at Grand Avenue Congregational Church and Paul was 'invited' to join – to stop him becoming a juvenile delinquent.

This was his introduction to a new family – the church family. He began to attend Sunday services and became involved in youth club.

Here he met Jean, the start of a long and loving relationship. He also met the woman who was to become his mother-in-law with the infamous statement: "So you must be Mrs Overup!" but he was soon accepted into the Underdown family, even taking over the coveted Saturday job as Co-op delivery boy, (complete with Granville-type bike!) from Jean's brother, Keith.

The minister at the time was Mary Evans, the person who would have a huge influence on Paul's spiritual life.

Paul did not enjoy school, except for rugby, and left at 15 to start an apprenticeship, later qualifying as a ship fitter/turner and he worked in Cardiff and Barry Dock.

He played rugby for St Joseph's, a Catholic club made up of boys of many different backgrounds.

While Jean was away at college, Paul embarked on a course of study with the aim of entering the ministry. Late one evening, he was returning from Mary's house on his bicycle when he was stopped by the local bobby and asked what was in his bag.

His answer of a Bible and other books was not believed until he opened his bag.

Paul and Jean were married at Grand Avenue on August 14, 1971 and set up home in Barry. A year later in 1972, full of trepidation, they said goodbye to their families in Wales when Paul began studying in the Northern Congregational College, Manchester.

While there he played rugby for Broughton Park.

In 1976, Paul was ordained and they settled into the Wellingborough group of URCs. In October Matthew was born. Very soon he acquired two boy cousins with whom he spent a lot of time.

The family connections continued as Mary Evans baptised Matthew, and Paul baptised his cousin Peter at Wellingborough on Easter Sunday 1977. Peter was looking forward to Paul being able to take part in his wedding next year.

Paul, of course, played rugby for the town.

Then in 1983 they were called to the very different challenge of Kingston, Jamaica. The warmth of the weather was matched by the warmth of the members of St John's United Church. Jamaica was full of wonderful people, enduring difficult circumstances.

Paul and Jean took one family under their wing. The Hayden boys became, and remain, part of the family.

Paul played rugby once there too, it was an international, Jamaica v Grand Cayman!

The family returned in 1986 and stayed in Cheltenham for 10 months, Matthew having great fun having a brother and two sisters for a while. Paul helped at St Andrew's URC while their minister was ill and made his presence felt as always.

Paul managed to find a rugby club here too.

In November they moved to Lincoln. This was an appointment that shared the ministry at Ermine URC with being college chaplain and part of the student services counselling team, as well as shared prison chaplaincy.

It was important to Paul and Jean that Matthew could have a settled education and they remained in Lincoln until Matthew completed school and college.

Paul played rugby for the city team, had the privilege to be voted chairman and then president, and since had been made a life member.

Keith Younger, who played alongside Paul in Lincoln, told The GEM: "Paul was 37 when he arrived, and captained the third team from fly-half.

"I believe that in his 20s, centre was his best position, and he played the game with passion and didn't take a backward step.

"He used to say: 'For six-and-a-half days of the week, I'm a churchman, but on Saturday afternoon I'm a rugby player'."

In 2001 Paul, Jean and Matthew came home to Wales, when Paul was called to share the ministry of Trinity Methodist and United Reformed Church and to the Bridgend United Area. Initially this appointment was for seven years, but they stayed until Paul retired last year. Paul was very proud to act as mentor to Branwen as she progressed towards ordination.

Paul visited Malawi for three months in 1999 and again for two months in 2009. He used his experience there to inspire his congregations to support his aim of helping the church in Malawi build its own worship place.

In 2012, Matthew and Nia were married at Trinity. A year later it was Paul's privilege to baptise Arthur and two years after that, Lili arrived to complete the family. Pops had arrived!

Now Paul was too old to play rugby so instead served as chaplain to Porthcawl Rugby Club. He was proud to be a founder member of Grumpy Old Men and an enthusiastic allotment holder. He bravely took part in the Christmas Day swim to raise money for Christian Aid 11 times until the congregation decided to sponsor him NOT to swim.

Paul was proud of his Seychellois roots and in April this year, Paul and Jean fulfilled his ambition of visiting the Seychelles. Paul loved the warmth, of the land and the people, and hoped to return, perhaps using the Seychellois passport that he was entitled to.

They were thrilled to meet up with some family members and hoped to find out more about his father's family in the future.

Paul was just settling in to his new life at Haulwen Lodge and was investigating buying a mini-tractor to be his new toy. He hadn't become an apiarist but he did become an arsonist – setting fire to the field one day.

Husband, father, Pops, brother, uncle, son-in-law, brother-in-law (-in-law), minister, mentor, counsellor, colleague, team-mate, Grumpy Old Man, gardener, friend – however you knew Paul, he will be impossible to forget.

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Looking back on Cowbridge's special day when Reindeer Parade thrilled the crowds

An added extra to this year's Reindeer Parade was 'The Tractor boys of Aberthin' – well-known for their charity runs around the Vale. For the parade, they even brought their own Christmas tree!

WHEN a day has been hailed universally as a success, it is always nice to look back on it – and that is certainly the case with this year's reindeer parade in Cowbridge, which attracted a record crowd to the event, despite biting cold winds.

ABOVE: The angels kept smiling despite the cold!

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

OTHER PICTURES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THIS EVENT.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:

E-Mail: ffotoimage@tiscali.co.uk
Telephone 07791 228684
www.ffotoimage.co.uk

The Barrivale Bridge results

LATEST results from Barrivale Bridge Club for Novemeber 29.

1st Mike Close and Mick Green 61.90%; 2nd Kay Dyer and Jane Brook 58.33%; 3rd Judith Owen and Noelle Bond 57.74%.

Judith Owen and Noelle Bond won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. A partner may be arranged if required. If you would like to join us ring 01446 418380 or 01446 733425 or 01446 735592 call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry on Tuesdays at 7.00pm.

Alternatively players, inexperienced or new, may attend on Fridays at 10am at the same address.

DR

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Santas get fit in Barry at town Mayor's fun run

PICTURES BY KEVIN MOORE

DURING her year as Barry Town Mayor, Coun Charlotte Williams is raising money for three charities, the Stroke Association, Downs Syndrome association and Breast Cancer Now.

On a very crisp and bright Sunday, December 4, over 200 people registered to take part in the Santa Fun Run, supported by Barry Town Council, which was fantastic – with numbers on the day reaching the 300 mark!

There was a real 'Christmassy' atmosphere, thanks to Christmas classics played by the Barry Brass Band, carols from the Barry Ladies Choir, Bro Radio Christmas tunes and mince pies kindly supplied by Marco's.

A town council spokesperson said: "Let's not forget the 200-plus Santas and the many little elves in tow – it was great to see so many people having fun.

"However, it wouldn't feel like Christmas if Santa and his sleigh were not there, so a big thank you to Barry Round table for arranging Santa's presence.

"Just before the race started there was a fancy dress competition for under-16s with prizes donated by 'Carousel' and 'Whitmore & Jackson'. Then to get the party started, Mark Lloyd from Brawd Men's Health rounded up all the participants for a group warm up.

"To capture the events of the day, photographer Kevin Moore kindly donated his time; and pictures can be viewed via Barry Town Mayor's Facebook page.

"Coun Charlotte Williams would like to thank the charities involved, all the volunteers on the day and colleagues at Barry Town Council for organising the event. It was a great success and the start of something new for Barry Town Council, who will continue to organise this as an annual event in support of the Barry Town Mayor's charities."

Age Connects' Christmas party at Llantonian Hall is a big hit

THE Llantonian Hall rang out to the sounds of music and laughter on December 5, when Age Connects Good Neighbours held their annual party for older people.

While it was cold outside, in the hall it was warm with good cheer and entertainment provided by the barbershop quarter Old Spice.

Volunteers not only helped to serve the delicious food and drinks, but provided transport and good company.

The co-ordinator would like to thank the Llantwit Major Mayor, Coun Sally Hanks (*pictured below*) for attending and giving out the surprise presents.

Thanks again to all the local businesse who yet again provided gifts for our guests. We also had the pleasure of a visit from staff at Marks and Spencers, Culverhouse Cross who had brought a gift for each of our guests.

The Good Neighbours would like to wish all a very happy Christmas.

BP

'Barry Boy' Charles Byrd celebrates 100th birthday!

THE artist Charles Byrd, well known for his paintings of Cardiff Docks in the 1950s and 60s, celebrated his 100th birthday in style on Saturday, December 3.

Many of his friends and family gathered at Canton Library for a special birthday party organised by the library staff.

Charles Byrd was born in Pontypridd but at the age of 10 he moved to Barry, where he attended Romilly Road Elementary School and became a member of the famous Romilly Boys' Choir.

Charles and his family only lived in Barry for about four years before moving to Cardiff. It could be easily argued however, that those formative years spent in Barry, with its busy docks, coal ships, paddle steamers, cranes, steam powered engines and the emerging fairground had a subliminal influence on Charles' abstract paintings, and especially on his kinetic sculptures.

One of these kinetic sculptures, his 'Magical Machines', can be seen at the Central Library in King Square, Barry and another at Ysgol Bro Morgannwg.

Charles still works tirelessly on his ever-increasing number of small sculptures, while also revisiting some of his earlier works, painstakingly bringing them to life once more.

Charles Byrd celebrating his 100th birthday with his sister Barbara at Canton Library. Some of his paintings of Canton can be seen in the background.

Remembering loved ones

PENARTH Funeral Directors are reaching out to bereaved families by providing a small memorial tree for them to dedicate a personal message, in tribute to those no longer here at this special time of year.

A spokesperson said: "Those wishing to participate are invited to call in to Hickman Road Funeral Home or telephone 029 20703581 with their personal messages, dedications or photographs, which will be placed on the tree of remembrance in the funeral home reception room.

"The family chapel is available for those wishing to spend some time in quiet contemplation, light a candle and remember their loved ones. Families need not have used the services of the Penarth Funeral Directors as this reflective time is open to all."

Each month, they make a significant financial donation to a local charity and have chosen the Salvation Army as the recipient of the December offering.

New Coastal path section is safer and easier to walk

A SECTION of the Wales coastal path near Llantwit Major has been upgraded and is now officially open!

Coun Gwyn John, Vale Council colleagues, and a representative of Natural Resources Wales were in Llantwit Major this week to sign off completion of the latest section of the Wales Coastal Path to be upgraded.

Work to the path at Dimhole, west of Llantwit Major Beach, was completed in October following a £33,500 investment.

The path, which was previously very uneven and ran alongside a high cliff edge, has been set back to a safe distance and its surface greatly improved for a disrtance of 165 metres.

Coun John said: "With some of the nation's finest coastline here in the Vale, the council is determined to enable more people to experience it.

"The new route and surface will open up this section of the coastal path to more people than ever and allow both residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to walk one of the nicest sections of the Heritage Coast."

The Wales Coast Path has proved popular with visitors since opening in 2012 and the Vale Council, Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales work in partnership to improve and maintain it.

A new section of the Wales Coastal Path is ready to welcome walkers.

Cards for Good Causes on sale

DIABETES UK Cymru wants local people to know that it isn't too late to stock up on Christmas cards and help a whole range of charities at the local 'Cards for Good Causes' shop.

The cards will be on sale at the pop-up store in Cowbridge's Community College until December 17 from 10am to 5pm on Monday to Saturday. At least 70p of every pound spent on cards in the shops will be given directly to the charity.

Cards for Good Causes now manages over 300 shops around the UK in the run-up to Christmas in vacant shop units as well in churches, libraries and other public spaces.

In the past 10 years, charities have received more than £40 million from Cards for Good Causes.

Diabetes UK Cymru's Director Dai Williams, said: "There is a huge range of cards available this year – whatever your tastes, and buying cards is an easy way to support Diabetes UK this Christmas.

"If you want to support a charity by buying Christmas cards, buying direct is the best option. After administrative costs there are no hidden charges so all the money goes to the charity and Diabetes UK gets the most benefit from your purchase.

"Money you raise will help us to fund vital research into diabetes, campaign on key issues, and support even more of the four and a half million people in the UK who are living with the condition.

"If you buy your charity cards from commercial shops, do check what percentage they will be passing on to the charity."

Residents turn out in force for Dinas Powys by-pass meeting

ALMOST 200 Dinas Powys residents attended a public meeting on November 29 to demand action on a by-pass for the village.

Politicians of all parties were invited to attend the event, organised by Dinas Powys Conservatives and chaired by South Wales Central AM Andrew RT Davies, with the aim of the event bringing people together to finally get the project going.

Among those present were Plaid Cymru councillor Chris Franks, Independent councillor Chris Williams, Conservative community councillors Margaret Hayley and Vince Driscoll and Steve Thomas of the Saving Sully Action Group. Representatives of Jane Hutt AM and Alun Cairns MP also attended.

The project has been given hope in recent months, following comments by Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure Ken Skates that he would happily play a part in trying to deliver it.This has led to renewed calls on the Vale Council to put in a fresh bid, but there have been fears that a 300 house development on the old St Cyres School site would block the route.

Following the meeting, Mr Davies wrote to both the Vale Council and Mr Skates, urging them to do all within their powers to block any development that would put the by-pass in jeopardy.

He has also written to Barry and Penarth Town Councils, as well as Michaelston-le-Pit and Leckwith, Sully and Lavernock and Llandough Community Councils, to seek their views.

Mr Davies said: "Dinas residents have been promised a by-pass for over half a century, and in showing out on a cold Tuesday night they have demonstrated the strength of feeling on the issue.

"Ken Skates' comments are encouraging, and it is vital we all work together to deliver a solution. That means stopping any developments that would block the proposed route.

"Now is not the time for petty politicking and instead the council must get on board and make the project a reality."

CHRISTMAS activities are being planned at Barry library, beginning with festive tree decorations on December 10 at 11am – 12pm, ages 5 – 11 (cost £2).

Crochet for beginners, December 14 from 3.30pm – 5pm, free. Christmas storytime, December 14 at 2pm, ages 2 ½ - 5; free. Christmas Crafts on December 16, from 4pm – 5pm ages 6 – 10. Cost per session £1.

RUGBY CELEBS OUT IN FORCE TO HELP BARRY COMPREHENSIVE

BARRY Comprehensive School's under-14 rugby team set themselves the challenge of pedalling the distance from Barry to Barcelona to raise funds for their rugby tour to Spain.

Thirty-five boys from the school pedalled the 765 miles on 10 exercise bikes outside the Holiday Inn, Cardiff as crowds flocked past to watch the Wales v South Africa game on Saturday, November 26.

The event was given a massive boost by the appearance of a host of special guests and celebrities. Former Wales and Lions backrow Martyn Williams started the challenge and joined in with the pedalling.

During the five hours the challenge took to complete, former Welsh Internationals Nigel Davies, Jason Strange and Rhys Williams, as well as TV celebrities John Inverdale and Rick O'Shea generously gave their support.

The highlight of the day for the boys was the appearance of former world rugby Player of the Year, Shane Williams, who posed for photos and took a turn on a bike.

Mr Manley, event organiser from Barry Comprehensive School, said: "I'd like to thank all of the rugby players and celebrities, as well as the students, their parents and school colleagues who gave up their time to help us raise money for our rugby tour to Barcelona.

"Special thanks must go to CJCH Solicitors for kindly sponsoring our t-shirts and to Mr Richard Platts, manager of the Holiday Inn, Cardiff for allowing us to hold the event outside the hotel and for all of his hospitality during the day.

"As a group we have completed many fund raising events for the tour and we would be delighted if any local companies would like to help us with sponsorship or support; please contact Mr David Manley at the school."

LEFT: Barry Comprehensive School's under-14 rugby team, are pictured 'pedalling to Barcelona' at the Holiday Inn, Cardiff.

Thumbs up all the way! Former World Player of the Year and entertainer Shane Williams.

BELOW: Sports pundit and TV celebrity John Inverdale.

ABOVE: Former Welsh International Jason Strange.

RIGHT: Former Welsh International Rhys Williams.

BELOW: TV celebrity and rugby presenter Rick O'Shea.

ABOVE: Former Wales and Lions backrow Martyn Williams started the challenge.

Maesteg town gets ready for Christmas with a parade, Santa, festive lights and fireworks

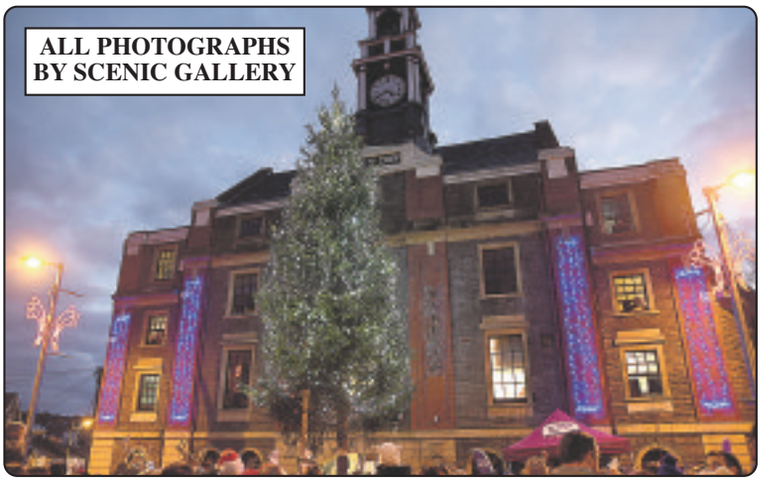
THE organisers of Maesteg's Christmas Parade are saying that this year's parade attracted the biggest attendence ever – with an estimated 3,000 families lining the streets.

Floats were dressed by many local organisations and businesses.

As well as the parade and fireworks, there was a craft fayre in the town hall, an outdoor carol service, and Christmas huts in the market.

Pictured (*below*) with town Mayor Coun Jen Terry, is Lucas Jordan, aged 10, a pupil at St Mary's and St Patrick's Primary School, who took first prize in the 'design a Christmas poster' competition for schools.

The firework display started as night fell.



ABOVE: A Christmas tree and lights on the town hall.

ABOVE: Santa arrives in the town centre.

The carol service was well attended.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH PARK CRESCENT

From Demon Barbers to BLush, Bella Donne Gallesi and Cutting It by Sue – Park Crescent leads in hair and beauty!

OVER the last month, The GEM has highlighted all that's best in local shopping areas across the Vale and Bridgend

What they all have in common is hardworking, committed business people, often running family concerns.

Park Crescent is blessed with a wide range of businesses and one strong theme is its excellent hairdressing and beauty businesses.

The Demon Barbers, at 124 Park Crescent has a really good atmosphere with great banter. On the day The GEM popped in to see Steve and the team they were doing a roaring trade.

The Demon Barbers is open six days a week and do special deals for senior citizens. On Friday, senior citizens have a special discount from 9am until 3pm.

They are open from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday and 9am to 4.30pm on Saturday.

All the hairdressers are 'time served' and the business is a member of the National Hairdressers Association. To book an appointment, call 01446 421300.

Steven told The GEM: "On Christmas Eve, we will be open until 12 noon.

"We'd like to wish all our customers a very 'Happy Christmas and Prosperous 2017'.

There are also shops dedicated to the very best in beauty and hairdressing for local ladies.

The exotically named **Belle Donne Gallesi**, run by Jenny Thomas at 116c Park Crescent, is a stylish, unisex hair salon.

Cutting It by Sue is based at 116b Park Crescent provides all sorts of hair styling and colouring. Ladies, men and children are welcome.

On the day The GEM visited the ladies were in full flow with a packed salon of loyal customers enjoying the friendly atmosphere – as good an endorsement of a business as you could wish for.

Need a hair-do for a special occasion, just call 01446 722633. But appointments are not always necessary, and the ladies will always fit you in.

And at the time of 'goodwill to all men', the staff at 'Cutting It by Sue' said they wanted to thank local council worker Mike Weeks for the fantastic job he does in keeping Park Crescent spick and span.

Holly at **BLush Beauty Boutique** has developed a great reputation for delivering top beauty treatments. And yes, BLush, is correctly spelt. Get it?

Don't take The GEM's word for it, on Facebook, satisfied client Sophia comments:

"I had my beautiful Christmas gel nails done with Holly today, along with my waxing. A first class service with a smile and such a relaxing environment, Thank you BLush."

Two of the most popular beauty treatments are 'Moroccan Tan with Argan Oil', and 'CND Shellac', striking nail polish in a host of colours.

Holly said: "We have late nights until 9pm, if required, in the lead-up to Christmas. We won't be open on Christmas Eve, but will re-open on December 29 and 30, and then be back to normal on Tuesday, December 3.

"In January, we will be relaunching the website and there will be more fantastic offers."

If you go to BLush on Facebook, you can see some of Holly's great work in exotic nails and terrific teeth whitening!

So if you want to look your best for that Christmas party or on Christmas Day itself, remember Park Crescent means the best in hair dressing and beauty treatments.

'BLush' – Holly and the staff provide a huge range of beauty treatments at 12 Park Crescent, Barry.

Need a hair-do for that Christmas Party? Then call Cutting It by Sue on 01446 722633. Appointments are not always necessary, so feel free to drop in.

Florantina Florists delivers quality bouquets and arrangements locally – or pop in and pick one up for a loved one.

Tulip Bridal's winter fayre this Saturday

TULIP Bridal Wear & Wedding Photography, at 6 St Nicholas Road, sells every sort of wedding gown and accessory you could possibly wish for.

This Saturday, December 10, the popular wedding boutique is hosting a winter fayre and special raffle.

A spokeswoman explained: "Two members of Tulip Bridal, Kim and Jemma have made a Christmas tree dress and we decided to auction the dress for Ty Hafan.

"On Saturday, between 1pm and 4pm we will be holding a winter fayre and raffle at Tulip.

"We have Christmas stalls, Indian spices and make up and nails.

"Santa Claus will also be making an appearance. The Grotto will be open between 2pm-3pm.

"Our special guest is world boxing champion Lee Selby who will draw the raffle. Prizes have been donated by local businesses."

Belle Donne Gallesi run by Jenny Thomas at 116c Park Crescent, is a stylish, unisex hair salon.

All the staff at Demon Barbers, 124 Park Crescent, would like to wish their clients a 'Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year'.

At the Home Brew Centre a wine starter kit begins at £15.50, and a bottle can work out at just £1.50.

Harvey's Fish 'n' Chips in Vale Street provides the great British takeaway!

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CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH PARK CRESCENT

SPECIALISTS PROVIDE THE 'SPICE OF LIFE'

SPECIALIST businesses are at the heart of Park Crescent. They provide more in depth products and services than supermarkets and many chain retailers.

The Home Brew Centre, at 2 Park Crescent, is a real family affair, and started off as a hobby.

The owner Pamela explained: "It was started by my husband Howard (who passed away two and a half years ago). He started it 26 years ago, after he retired from BT. It was a personal interest before it was a business.

"We sell first class home brew kits for wine and beer. Once people start doing it, it becomes a real hobby."

For wine, a starter kits begin at £15.50, and a bottle can work out at just £1.50.

It's a real family business. Pamela continues Howard's legacy with help from her son and grandson.

She said: "We've got a really loyal clientele."

AA Dancewear owned by Anne Taylor is a long-established business on the crescent – over 20 years.

Anne said: "We're the longest established dance shop in Wales. From budding ballerinas to professional level we are a one stop shop for all people's dancewear needs. We are pointe shoe fitters with 20 years of experience.

"We have the most extensive range of dancewear, gym and aerobic wear in the region, and are proud of our old fashioned values – excellent customer care and high quality products at affordable prices."

Among the many dance labels stocked are Arabesque, Bloch, Bunheads, Freed, Grisko, Tappers and Pointers, Pineapple and Roch Valley & Zone. Call Anne to check on stock on 01446 721188.

My Favourite Pet Shop run by Alison Moya offers a range of pet products that no supermarket could ever match. What comes across is the staff's enthusiasm for what they have on offer.

Sophie explained: "For Christmas we've got doggy and cat hampers which include treats, a toy, a collar or a bow."

These would make a great present for the doting dog or cat lover.

Alison added: "We are a dog boutique, providing best prices, and specialise in items for small animals such as tiny collars and leads.

"We've got a huge choice in doggy play pens, puppy slings, a lovely selection of beds, dog training puzzles and Eden dog food."

And Alison's salon next door (open Monday to Saturday) will pamper and groom your dog too. Phone Chic and Sleek Grooming Salon on 01446 744633 for an appointment.

My Favourite Pet Shop closes at 2pm on Christmas Eve, but opens the following Wednesday.

Barry Angling Centre has been open for over 30 years under the knowledgeable stewardship of Gerald.

It stocks every possible product needed by the keen angler and Gerald trades seven days a week – even open until 12 noon on Sunday.

Popular products at this time of the year are his range of wellies and waterproofs, to keep the hardy enthusiasts as insulated as possible in the more extreme weather conditions.

Florantina Florists is owned by Ann Caesar who is related to the previous owners the Kellaway family.

Florantina specialises in sympathy tributes, and bouquets – whether for birthdays, anniversaries or celebrations. The shop is a dazzling array of colour.

What is the secret of its 27-year success?

It provides quality arrangements and will do same day delivery that can sometimes be ready within an hour.

ALL YOUR VITAL SECURITY NEEDS

BARRY Security Centre is run by Matthew Cullen. If you have a security, lock or key problem, phone him on 01446 740119.

On the day The GEM visited, Matthew was about to help someone who was locked out of their house. He is well known in Barry and has traded since 2000, first in Broad Street, but for eight years on Park Crescent. Alarm systems, padlocks, night locks, multi-point locks for PVC doors, domestic safes – you name it, Matthew can you help with it.

There's a huge selection of dance wear and dance shoes at A A Dancewear.

My Favourite Pet shop is a pet boutique, providing best prices, and it specialises in items for small dogs such as tiny collars and leads.

Everyone is welcome at The Park!

THE Park Hotel on Park Crescent is a relaxing, community pub which is well worth a visit.

It has got a lot of friendly regulars who welcome newcomers seven days a week. There are real ales on tap. People can have a drink and enjoy the sport on TV.

There's a function room which can host christenings, weddings, birthday parties and special events.

There's live music this month: 'Get Ready' perform on December 21; 'Sugar Time' on December 22; and 'Outback' on December 23.

You can follow The Park on Facebook and Twitter for regular band night dates.

ACCOUNTING SERVICES TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

TaxAssist Accountants is a family-run business looking after the accountancy needs of small businesses and individuals in Cardiff and Barry.

Russell Charles has been a practicing accountant since 1992 and, in partnership with his wife Katherine, their three offices provide a range of services including tax returns, annual accounts, payroll and bookkeeping.

Both Russell and Katherine were born and brought up in Barry and have lived in Cardiff for more than 30 years. They have been running their own business for more than 24 years and know first-hand the challenges faced by small businesses and tailor their services accordingly.

With its fixed fee policy and flexible payment options, TaxAssist Accountants helps a diverse range of small businesses including sole traders, landlord, limited companies and start-ups in many industries.

For more information about how TaxAssist Accountants can help you save money and develop your business, please contact Russell and Katherine today on 01446 597980; 11 Park Crescent, CF62 6HD.

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APPLICATION DEADLINE: 14 DECEMBER 2016

All Homes4U properties have double glazing and central heating unless otherwise stated and will be allocated to the maximum occupancy.

It may take longer to rehouse you if you are awarded medical priority as there is a shortage of accessible and adapted homes in the Vale.

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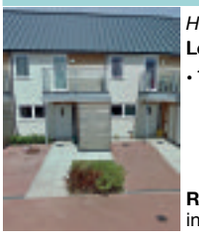

H4U Reference 138948
Local lettings policy applies
- Three-bedroom house

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H4U Reference 205208
- Four-bedroom parlour house

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H4U Reference 139083
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H4U Reference 231128
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- Warden and alarm

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You must be a HOMES4U member to apply for any of the rented homes.

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All descriptions and other details are given in good faith and are believed to be correct but any potential tenant should satisfy themselves as to their correctness.

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Family Notices

SANDERSON
Peter

Peacefully, on Thursday December 1, at Maesteg Community Hospital; Peter, of Hillhead, Llantwit Major. Beloved husband of the late Betty, loving father of Rob and daughter-in-law Tracy and a much loved grandfather Isobel and Stephanie.

Funeral Thursday, December 15. Service and cremation at Coychurch Crematorium at 1.45pm, where friends please meet.

Family flowers only, by request, donations in lieu, if desired, to Cancer Research (Wales) c/o Penybont Funeral Services, Meadow Street, Bridgend, CF31 1HE. Tel: 01656 650831.

CLINT
Valerie Georgina

Peacefully on December 4 at Holme Tower Marie Curie Centre, Penarth, Val of Llantwit Major. Beloved wife of the late Joseph, dearly loved mother of Ian, Derek and Dale, much loved mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Wednesday, December 14, Service and cremation 12 noon at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend. No flowers by request, donations in lieu, if desired, to Holme Tower Marie Curie Centre c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3DZ.

YARWOOD
Doreen Evelyn (Formerly Saunders)

Peacefully on November 29 at Llandough Hospital after a short illness Doreen, aged 96 years, of Peterston-s-Ely. Dearly loved mother of Anne and Peter, much loved by all her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Friday, December 9, service 1.45pm at Peterston-s-Ely Parish Church, followed by cremation at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry at 3pm. No flowers by request, donations in lieu, if desired, to RNIB c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3DZ.

MACE
Malcolm James

O.B.E., O.St.J., QFSM, FIFireE, FBIM.

Mick, Chief Fire Officer of Cardiff City, Powys and South Glamorgan, sadly passed away on November 26 at the age of 90 years, after a short illness in Llandough Hospital. Beloved husband of the late Sheila, father to Robert and Nigel, father-in-law to Kath and Denise.

Mick will be sadly missed by all who knew him especially his grandchildren Nicole, Phillip, Neil and Sophie, great grandchildren Mathew, Adam, Lexie and Louie.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Monday, December 12, service at 11.45am at St. Cadocs Church, Llancarfan, followed by a family cremation service at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry. No flowers by request, donations in lieu, if desired, to The Fire Fighters Charity, c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3DZ.

ENOS
Elaine Mary

Peacefully, on 2nd December 2016 at home, in the presence of her loving family, aged 87, Elaine; beloved wife of the late Merlin, much loved mum of Carole, Brian and Val, dear mother-in-law to Peter, Gaynor and Bob. Elaine was an adored gran and great-gran.

She will be sadly missed by all her family and her many friends.

Resting at James Summers & Son Lavernock Court, Lavernock Road, Penarth, CF64 5UP until the funeral service on Wednesday, 14th December 2016 at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Port Road East, Barry at 10am.

Family flowers only please, donations in lieu, if desired to Marie Curie Cancer Care, Bridgeman Road, Penarth, CF64 3YR

THOMAS
Jeanne

Peacefully on November 29 Jeanne, beloved wife of the late Tudor, mother of Catherine and David, father-in-law of Ian and Rebecca, grandfather of Thomas and Emily.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W. James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Friday, December 16, service and cremation 11.30am at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend. No flowers by request.

ROBERTS
Ann

Peacefully at home with her family, Ann, much loved wife of the late Cliff, loving mother, adored nain.

She will be sadly missed by all.

Funeral service at Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge on Friday, December 9 at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Donations in lieu may given to Marie Curie Hospice, Bridgeman Road, Penarth, CF64 3YR.

OLNEY
Andrew David

(of Carlisle and Barry)

Suddenly at Freeman Hospital Newcastle upon Tyne on 30th November.

Andrew, son of Tess and the late David Olney, brother to Peter, Gareth and Anne. Devoted husband, father and grandfather.

Will be very sadly missed - Rest in Peace.

Birthdays

HAPPY 40th BIRTHDAY

Manuela Bates

on 9th December

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Love from the Esposito Family xxx

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A gentleman in the Rhoose area is offering a part time job for 12 hours per week. The purpose of the job is to support around the home as well as out in the community.

Rate of pay is £8.50 per hour.

For further details please contact: Dewis Centre for Independent Living (01443) 827930.

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Seasons Greetings

Wishing all our friends and family a Very Happy Christmas & a Peaceful 2017

With much love from David and Jane Maggs

This year we are supporting Crisis At Christmas

Mary Young Smith

Formerly of 309 Barry Road, Barry, now residing at Bella Vista Care Home, Barry, would like to wish all former neighbours and friends

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR.

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Silver, 2003, 74,500 miles 9 month MOT

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Public Notice

LICENSING ACT 2003
Section 34
Notice of Application for a Premises Licence
NOTICE IS GIVE THAT
An application has been made to Bridgend County Borough Council (the Licensing Authority) for a **VARIATION TO THE PREMISES LICENCE** in respect of the premises shown below. Details of the application may be inspected between the hours of : Monday to Thursday 0830 to 1700 hours and Friday 0830 to 1630 hours at Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB or by visiting the authority's website: www.bridgend.gov.uk.
Any responsible authority or any other person may make representations in respect of the application, which must be submitted, in writing, to the following address before the date shown below:-
Licensing Section, Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB
NAME OF APPLICANT:
JONATHAN DAVIES
NAME AND POSTAL ADDRESS OF THE PREMISES:
BETTWS COMMUNITY CLUB, BRIDGEND, CF32 8TA
DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED VARIATION: (1)
*All entertainment including sporting, live music and plays etc from 7:00 – 00:00 Monday to Sunday
*Alcohol sales between 9:00 – 00:00 Monday to Sunday
*Opening hours 7:00 – 00:30 – Monday to Sunday
*Additional 1 hour on opening hours and licensable activities on boxing day, New Year's Eve/Day and Sunday's leading into Bank Holiday Mondays.
*Condition removed which restricts children from entering the bar.
*Condition removed to provide free transport
DATE BY WHICH REPRSENTATIONS MUST BE MADE: 8th December 2016
This notice remains in force from and including the day after the giving of this notice to the licensing authority, namely 10/11/2016, for 28 consecutive days. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine on summary conviction is £5,000.
(1) This must include details of changes to the activities, type of entertainment and appropriate days and times.

Property

ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

65 year old man looking for self contained bedsit or one bedroom flat

Telephone John on

07528 648686

Articles For Sale

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For Sale

Boy's Apollo Sandstorm mountain bike for age 9 -11. Colour blue, 24" wheels. Hardly used.

£50

Tel 07733 067632

FOR SALE
3 piece suite

Dark green fabric sofa in good condition, wear and tear on the armchairs

£250 ono (Buyer Collects)

01446 750387

4ft Manchester United Soccer Game

Excellent Condition Hardly used

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01656 870677

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Breville 2 slice Sandwich Toaster **£10**

Plastic Portable Pet Steps for small dog **£5**

Scholl Colour Pop foot spa **£10**

Goodmans Sound Bar with Bluetooth device 50 watt **£20**

Car Polisher **£10**

All new, unused and boxed

01446 401252

The GEM

01446 774484

NEWS AND SPORT ROUND-UP FROM PENARTH'S STANWELL SCHOOL

Macy Brown and Kitty Picton have been selected for south Wales at football.

The royal visit for the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

Children In Need Day at Stanwell.

Megan Hitchen won the south Wales final in a young chef competition.

Niamh Miller has gained ice skating representative honours.

Pupils having a good time at the Urdd centre at Glan-llyn.

Cadbury World visit

ON Thursday, November 3, 100 very excited year-8 geographers visited Cadbury World to learn more about 'the geography of chocolate.'

Pupils were treated to a talk on the location of industry and Cadbury's effects on the global environment, as well as touring the factory, tasting lots of chocolate and enjoying the 4D film experience.

Miraculously, nobody was sick on the return journey!

Year-7 football

Congratulations to year-7 pupils Macy Brown and Kitty Picton who both had a trial to represent south Wales at various games throughout the season.

We are delighted to announce that both girls were successful and will be representing south Wales this season, as well as playing for their local team, Sully Pinks.

Glan-llyn trip

YEAR-9 pupils took part in a fantastic outdoor activity weekend in the Urdd centre in Glan-llyn, north Wales. The cold weather did little to dampen the mood as they took part in the varied activities on or around the Lake Tegid.

It was an exciting experience, and a chance for the pupils to create fond memories, enjoy the spectacular scenery and develop their Welsh.

Cultural experience

AS part of their studies for the Welsh Baccalaureate, sixth form art and design students received a guided tour of the Artes Mundi exhibition, an internationally focused arts organisation which identifies, recognises and supports contemporary visual artists who 'engage with the human condition, social reality and lived experience'.

Best known for its biennial international exhibition and prize, it was a visual interpretation of their studies where students were encouraged to respond to the exhibits using sophisticated critical language.

Children In Need

STANWELL was a busy and fun-filled place as students raised money for the BBC Children In Need appeal.

Year-7 manned stalls of exciting activities and delicious baked goods and pupils from all year groups took part in a Stanwell's Got Talent concert in the afternoon. So far over £2,200 has been raised... Well done to all who contributed.

Sporting excellence

CONGRATULATIONS and good luck to Niamh Millar of year-9 who has been selected to compete in the basic novice B category for under-15s at the British National Ice-skating Championship, Sheffield.

Music success

WE are pleased to announce that talented harpist Huw Boucher of year-9 has won the Music in the Vale Young Instrumentalist of the Year for the second year running.

Huw is an incredibly versatile and promising musician, having also won prizes at the National Eisteddfod. We continue to follow his career with great interest.

Gymnastics competition

Year 7 and 8 gymnasts represented Stanwell at the Cardiff Games Gymnastics Competition on Monday, November 14. The squad performed some excellent routines on the day with Elin Thompson, Ethan Spear and Tom Whittaker receiving a score of 9.00 on one piece of apparatus. A great experience for all involved.

Trampolining championships

STANWELL'S trampolining squad competed in the Welsh Schools' Trampolining Championships in Cardiff where Darcy Richardson performed two fabulous routines securing her third place in the under-19 girls' intermediate category and Sophie Lias, one of our regular gymnasts competed for the first time in trampolining with two excellent routines that secured her first place in the under-14 girls' beginners category.

Congratulations to both girls. A special mention also to Ellen Carolan, Leoni Palmer, Niamh Taylor Hoare and Stella Wright who all gave very promising performances on the day.

Megan Hitchen a star in the kitchen

HUGE congratulations and well done to Megan Hitchen, who won the South Wales Springboard, Young Chef competition!

Megan competed against other pupils from schools across south Wales and came first. Good luck to Megan who will be representing Stanwell in the Welsh final in February next year.

Westminster Abbey

STANWELL students and staff were honoured to receive personal invitations to a ceremony at Westminster Abbey to mark the 60th anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Fourteen Duke of Edinburgh young leaders who have shown exceptional commitment to the scheme travelled to the ceremony and attended alongside Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and TRH The Duke of Edinburgh and the Earl and Countess of Wessex, celebrities and Philip Schofield. It was an unforgettable experience for the Stanwell party and they were all very proud to be representing the school at this prestigious event.

More What's On events

WI fair

PENLLYN and District WI are holding their annual Christmas fair on December 10 in The Lesser Hall, Cowbridge.

Gifts, cakes, jewellery, raffles, Christmas decorations and beautiful crafts are just some of the items on offer. Doors open at 10am and refreshments available throughout the day. Come and join us for this delightful start to the festive season.

Meeting in St Bride's

THE St Bride's Community Council meets on December 12 at All Saints' Church, Southerndown commencing at 7pm.

Cowbridge U3A

THE next Cowbridge U3A meeting will be entertainment by John Sheen, at 2pm on Wednesday, December 14 in Cowbridge Town Hall.

Visitors welcome (there is a small fee, which includes seasonal refreshments). See *www.u3asites.org.uk/cowbridge*.

Carol concert at Soar Chapel

Mid-Glamorgan Mixed Choir is presenting a carol concert at Soar Chapel, Rhiwceiliog on Thursday, December 15 at 7pm.

All are very welcome.

Lakmé

SWANSEA City Opera will be at the Town Hall, Maesteg on January 1 to stage *Lakmé*, following their acclaimed tour of *La Bohème*.

It includes the famous 'Flower duet' and 'Bell song' and will be sung in English.

Festival of Fools panto

THE Bridgend Castle Players' annual family pantomime is set in April 1, 1515 at Notre Dame Cathedral, on the occasion of the Festival of Fools.

The action takes place at Bettws Community Club on Friday, December 16 at 7.30pm (£2 per ticket). It can also be seen at Coytrahen Community Centre on Saturday, December 17; Sarn Social Club December 18; Cefn Cribwr Community Centre (the Green Hall) January 7, and Aberkenfig Welfare Hall, January 8.

All shows start at 4.30pm. Tickets available direct from www.bridgendcastleplayers.org, on the door (subject to availability) or via treasurer on 07814 881445.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL • CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012

Development that may affect a Conservation Area/
Datblygu a allai effeithio ar Ardal Gadwraeth

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01376/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Dairy building
Location:/Lleoliad: Penuchadre Farm, Wick Road, St. Brides Major
Conservation Area:/
Ardal Gadwraeth St. Brides Major

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01407/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Domestic double garage
Location:/Lleoliad: Greystones, Factory Road, Cowbridge
Conservation Area:/
Ardal Gadwraeth Llanblethian

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01425/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Change of use of coach house and cheese house into 4 no. additional holiday accommodation units, demolition of single storey lean-to attached to coach house and replacement with single storey conservatory, and internal and external alterations and associated works
Location:/Lleoliad: Coach House and Cheese House at Gileston Manor, Gileston Road, Gileston
Conservation Area:/
Ardal Gadwraeth Gileston

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01434/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Change of use of coach house and cheese house into 4 no. additional holiday accommodation units, demolition of single storey lean-to attached to coach house and replacement with single storey conservatory, and internal and external alterations and associated works
Location:/Lleoliad: Coach House and Cheese House at Gileston Manor, Gileston Road, Gileston
Conservation Area:/
Ardal Gadwraeth Gileston

Listed Building Consent/Caniatâd Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01361/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Conversion of rear hotel annexe to Hotel Mangers flat. Regularisation application in relation to pre-commencement conditions for submission of window details and notice of commencement
Location:/Lleoliad: Glendale Hotel, 8-10, Plymouth Road, Penarth
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01365/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Replacement of windows and doors, repair to stonework and render, repairs to roof, new zinc cladding to lean-to roof, and replacement of existing rain water goods
Location:/Lleoliad: 77, Eastgate, Cowbridge
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01404/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Extension to existing dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad: Plaisted House, Llanmaes
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Affecting setting of a Listed Building/
Cais (au) sy'n effeithio ar leoliad Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01232/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: The conversion of a redundant and derelict barn into a single detached residential dwelling, and the erection of the original cow shed structure to the South West perimeter of the site
Location:/Lleoliad: West Aberthaw Farm, West Aberthaw
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting the Heavy Horse Barn, Cart Shed, Bull House and West Aberthaw Farmhouse, all Grade II Listed Buildings

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01376/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Dairy building
Location:/Lleoliad: Penuchadre Farm, Wick Road, St. Brides Major
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting Penuchadre Farmhouse, Grade II and Barn and Cow Houses at Penuchadre Farm, Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01390/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Demolition of existing out houses and construction of a single storey 2 bedroom extension
Location:/Lleoliad: Cottrell Lodge, St Nicholas
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting Cottrell Lodge, St. Nicholas, Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01434/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Change of use of coach house and cheese house into 4 no. additional holiday accommodation units, demolition of single storey lean-to attached to coach house and replacement with single storey conservatory, and internal and external alterations and associated works
Location:/Lleoliad: Coach House and Cheese House at Gileston Manor, Gileston Road, Gileston
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting the Pigsty, Stable Block, Cheesehouse, the Cross in churchyard of the Church of St. Giles which are all Grade II Listed Buildings. Also affecting Gileston Manor and the Church of St. Giles which are Grade II* Listed Buildings

Application(s) of General Interest/
Ceisiadau o Ddiddordeb Cyffredinol

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/00551/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RECEIVED - Variations of conditions 1, 2, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27 and 28 of planning permission 2013/00903/FUL to increase the height of the final restoration levels to increase the volume of ash that can be deposited in the former quarry and to vary the associated details to which the conditions refer
Location:/Lleoliad: Aberthaw North Quarry, Castle Road, Aberthaw

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01232/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: The conversion of a redundant and derelict barn into a single detached residential dwelling, and the erection of the original cow shed structure to the South West perimeter of the site
Location:/Lleoliad: West Aberthaw Farm, West Aberthaw

May affect a Public Right of Way/
Gall effeithio ar Hawl Tramwy Cyhoeddus

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2016/01232/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: The conversion of a redundant and derelict barn into a single detached residential dwelling, and the erection of the original cow shed structure to the South West perimeter of the site
Location:/Lleoliad: West Aberthaw Farm, West Aberthaw

Application(s) with Environmental Statement/
Cais (au) gyda Datganiad Amgylcheddol

NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 8

Proposed development at Aberthaw North Quarry, Castle Road, Aberthaw.

I give notice that Mr. Hugh Morris is applying to The Vale of Glamorgan Council for Planning Permission to Variations of conditions 1, 2, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27 and 28 of planning permission 2013/00903/FUL to increase the height of the final restoration levels to increase the volume of ash that can be deposited in the former quarry and to vary the associated details to which the conditions refer.

The proposal has been submitted with an environmental statement (and addendum October 2016 – additional information received) which can be inspected at the address given below. Members of the public may obtain copies of the environmental statement at a charge of £150.00 (paper copy), £10.00 (CD/DVD copy), or the Non-Technical Summary free of charge from Support Services, Vale of Glamorgan Council, dock Office, Barry Docks, Barry CF63 4RT, so long as stocks last.

Members of the public may inspect copies of:
- The application.
- The plans.
- The environmental statement.
- Other documents submitted with the application.

at the address given below during all reasonable hours until 29 December, 2016.

Anyone who wishes to make representations about this application should write to the Head of Planning and Transportation at the address given below by 29 December 2016 quoting reference 2016/00551/FUL.

HYSBYSIAD O DAN ERTHYGL 8

Datblygiad arfaethedig yn Aberthaw North Quarry, Castle Road, Aberthaw

Hysbysir trwy hyn Mr. Hugh Morris n gwneud cais i Gyngor Bro Morgannwg am Ganiatâd Cynllunio ar gyfe Variations of conditions 1, 2, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27 and 28 of planning permission 2013/00903/FUL to increase the height of the final restoration levels to increase the volume of ash that can be deposited in the former quarry and to vary the associated details to which the conditions refer
Cafodd y cynnig ei gyflwyno gyda datganiad amgylcheddol (ac atodiad Hydre 2016 – wedi derbyn gwybodaeth ychwanegol) sydd ar gael i'w ddarllen yn y cyfeiriad isod. Gall aelodau o'r cyhoedd gael copïau o'r datganiad amgylcheddol am gost o £150.00 (copi papur), £10.00 (CD/DVD), neu'r Crynodeb Annhechnegol am ddim gan Wasanaethau Cymorth, Cyngor Bro Morgannwg, Doc Swyddfa, Dociau'r Barri, Y Barri CF63 4RT, cyhyd ag y stoc yn parhau.

Caiff aelodau o'r cyhoedd hefyd ddarllen copïau o'r:
- cais;
- cynlluniau;
- datganiad amgylcheddol;
- dogfennau eraill a gyflwynwyd gyda'r cais,

yn y cyfeiriad isod yn ystod oriau rhesymau tan 29 December, 2016.

Dylai unrhyw un sydd am wneud sylwadau ar y cais ysgrifennu at Bennaeth Cynllunio a Chludiant y cyngor (gwelwch y dudalen ar waelod y dudalen) erbyn 29 December 2016 an ddyfynnu'r cyfeirnod 2016/00551/FUL.

Details may be inspected for 21 days at the address given below, or via **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Gall manylion eu harchwilio am 21 diwrnod yn y cyfeiriad a roddir isod, neu drwy **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Dated / Dyddiedig: 8 December, 2016

V. L. Robinson
Operational Manager, Regeneration and Planning,
Vale of Glamorgan Council, Dock Office, Barry. CF63 4RT

No-shows frustrate manager

St Peters Seconds	**41**
Barry Seconds	**3**

BARRY Second XV continued their poor form as they exited the East District Cup.

Preparations for the match once again proved to be a nightmare for coach Rhidian Scott and manager Ken Chow, as the long list of players unavailable was combined with no less than five players withdrawing from the match day squad within moments of kick-off.

With players out of position and little warm-up, it was no surprise that Barry were under pressure right from the off. The situation would not improve for the next 80 minutes.

St Peters went ahead with Barry hardly touching the ball, and despite a brief rally, led by Hywel Jones, captain Dominic Busuttil and flanker Jake Goodfellow, when the visitors got on the scoreboard with a Dylan Robertson penalty, that was as good as it got for the green-and-whites.

Things went from bad to worse when talisman Jones hobbled off with a serious injury before full-back Rhys Knapman followed suit.

With even more players out of position the visiting defence became disorganised as the home side piled on the points.

Barry never gave up and strung together a few attacks in the second half, which, if not for a lack of cutting edge, would have yielded a few scores but it was not to be.

The players who bravely took to the field for the game must be commended for their dedication, but they were badly let down by those who once again lack responsibility in their own availability.

The game ended with manager Chow in the front row, which simply demonstrates the necessity of players to stop withdrawing from the match-day squads.

The situation leaves the coach frustrated and the manager considering his position.

There are no more games for the Second XV in 2016. Here is to hoping for better things in 2017.

Team: Knapman; Forrester, Busuttil (c), Evans, Gill; Robertson, Pugh; Fortt, Hall, Brooke; Deyes, M Jones; Goodfellow, Cleal, H Jones. Replacements: L Jones, Leech, Chow. Man of the match: Busuttil.

Ladies Skittle League results

THE latest results for the Barry and District Ladies Skittle League for week commencing November 21 are as follows:

First division: SV Gals (V Pycroft 29) 284, Colcot Ladies (C Fenton, M Snelling 29) 292; Pila Palas (H Palfrey, R Webb, A Williams 3) 321, Allsorts (R Dawe 31) 308; Family and Friends (H James 25) 226, Cigar Ladies (E Simmons 26) 224; Bakers Dozen (R Hewitson 28) 264, Bobby's Girls (A Seldon 27) 240; Red Admiral (S Clements 22) 234, Family Affair (S Evans 28) 243; Special Angels (L Mountford 24) 236, Space Finders (D Carter 31) 270; Barry Stars (W Jones 35) 335, Coppers (J William 31) 318.

Second division: Castle Bandits (C Kerslake 27) 246, Airways Angels (E Jones 30) 259; Roller Coaster (J Fairweather, S Spry, G Giles 23) 236, Merry Makers (R Collins 25) 187; Cad Con Fillies (S Chilcott 28) 212, SV Lights (L Norris 25) 189; After Eights (D Davies 28) 256, Castaways (J Byrne 30) 287; Breakaways (C Parfitt 30) 303 Fallen Angels (T Lawrence35) 296; Witchill Widows (S Strading 32) 304, Rhoose Starlights (N Barnfield 29) 314.

Third division: Little Devils (J H Jones 26) 188, SV Ladies (F Butler 27) 238; Vixens (H Jones 32) 279, Twilights (A Campbell 30) 275; Rebels (S IOram 24) 224, Etcetera (C Stillman, N Grasby 23) 193; Rugby Triers (C Jenkins 26) 258, Dolly Mixtures (E Peckham, G Burdge 30) 256; Hill Billies (G Moorcraft 34) 329, Witches (P Cookson 32) 320; Challengers (D Collard 31) 312, Uptown Girl (A Hobbs 34) 292.

Fourth division: Nite Outers (F Granville, J Davies, B Lowrie 22) 194; Socialites (J Savoury 25) 221; Off The Rails (K Green, I Rosser 25) 232; Hell Raisers (C Davies 30) 235; Persuaders (E Gardener 27) 225, Witchill Wanderers (C Morrissey 23) 153; Living On A Spare (S Mitchell 30) 284, Liberals (G Shier 33) 304; Aristocats (P Dancey 29) 236, Boozy Birds (A Lloyd 26) 155.

Please note that the Christmas raffle will take place on December 12; bring your raffle tickets and prizes.

Glamorgan Cricket Club mourns death of former captain Barry Lloyd

GLAMORGAN County Cricket Club was shocked and saddened to learn of the death of former player and captain Barry Lloyd after a short illness at the age of 63.

Born in September 1953, Barry had joined the Glamorgan staff in the early 1970s and the young off-spinner who was born and raised in Neath was regarded as a potential successor to Don Shepherd as the club's leading spin bowler.

As a result, the Welsh county arranged for the former pupil of Llangatwg Comprehensive School to have a spell on the MCC groundstaff during 1971 and 1972.

While at Lords, Barry came under the wing of MCC head coach Len Muncer, another outstanding off-spinner with Glamorgan, and a measure of his progress came with his debut for the Welsh county's 2nd XI in 1971, followed the next summer by his county championship debut for Glamorgan in their end-of-season game against Gloucestershire at Bristol.

After leaving the Lords' groundstaff, Barry also trained as a schoolteacher at Bangor College, but he continued to play for the Welsh county during his vacations, and in 1973 made his debut for Glamorgan in one-day cricket in their Sunday League game against Sussex at Hove.

Having completed his studies in 1977, Barry played on a regular basis for the Welsh county in both formats of the game for the next six summers. In 1981 he claimed 53 first-class wickets at just 32 runs apiece including a career-best return of 8/70 against Lancashire at Sophia Gardens.

Barry followed this in 1982 by taking 55 first-class wickets, besides claiming career-best one-day figures of 4/26 against the Combined Universities, also at Sophia Gardens.

Barry's greatest asset was his nagging accuracy and his frugal spells in one-day cricket, allied to his wicket-taking in championship matches, led to Barry winning his county cap in 1982.

It was something of a landmark summer for Barry as in 1982 he also shared captaincy duties with Javed Miandad.

Barry continued to play for Glamorgan until the end of the 1984 season and retired from the game with a career tally of 311 wickets for the 1st XI, including 247 in first-class cricket.

Barry appeared regularly for the Pontarddulais 1st XI until 2010. By this time, and to his great pride, his daughter Hannah had graduated from playing as a young girl with Pontarddulais to being selected for the England women's team.

On hearing of Barry's death, Glamorgan chief executive Hugh Morris said: "Barry was one of the first captains I played under in championship cricket for Glamorgan. He was hugely supportive of the young Welsh players in the squad and always wore the daffodil with pride.

"His passing is very sad news for us here at Glamorgan Cricket as well as for the wider cricket community in Wales, especially Pontarddulais, and we send our thoughts and prayers to his family and wide circle of friends at this most difficult time."

Paul nets a winner at Aintree

PAUL MOLONY, stable jockey to Llancarfan's Evan Williams, landed the opening £12,529 BetFred TV Fillies' 3 Years-Old Juvenile Hurdle at Aintree on Saturday on *Evening Hush*, a winner of her only other start 13 days previously.

Welsh jockey Sean Bowen won the £43,330 BetFred Grand Sefton Handicap Chase held over the Grand National course on champion trainer Paul Nicholls's *As De Me* the 4-1 favourite and at Chepstow *ToBeFair*, trained by Debra Hamer who hails from the Vale, made it five wins in a row when winning the Llewellyn Humphreys Handicap Hurdle at odds of 9-2.

Brian Lee

Brian Lee's most memorable Welsh Grand National winners – 2004 and *Silver Birch's* grand stand finish

THIS year's £150,000 Welsh Grand National at Chepstow will be held on December 27 and GEM columnist Brian Lee takes a look back at some of its most memorable races.

As par for the course, the 2004 Coral Welsh Grand National was run on heavy ground.

Paul Nicholls' *Silver Birch*, a seven-year-old bay gelding by *Clearly Bust-All Gone*, went off the 10/3 favourite in a field of 17 runners which included former winners *Supreme Glory* (2001) and *Bindaree* (2003).

Lucinda Russell's eight-year-old *Strong Resolve* set a strong pace despite having been ridden some two miles to Piercefield Park after his horsebox had been delayed by heavy traffic near the Severn Bridge.

Four fences from the finish *Silver Birch* was one of half-a-dozen or so horses still in with a chance, and it was at this fence that the top weighted *Take A Stand* came down, when seemingly going as well as any of the others that were in contention.

Silver Birch then jumped to the front three fences from home and, although tending to idle, went on to score by two lengths from the pace-making *Strong Resolve,* with *Chives* one-and-three-quarters of a length back in third spot.

Little more than five lengths covered the first five home but *Silver Birch*'s greatest moment was still to come as he went on to win the 2007 John Smith Grand National at Aintree. In doing so, he denied the Welsh trainer Peter Bowen's *McKelvey* – beaten just three quarters of a length – and who was badly hampered during the race – from becoming the first Welsh trained winner since *Kirkland* which had won in 1905.

And Paul Nicholls, it should be noted, had ridden *Playschool* to victory at Chepstow in the 1987 renewal.

Brian Lee is the author of The Welsh Grand National – From Deerstalker to Emperor's Choice – *which is published by The History Press*.

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www.glamorgan-gem.co.uk

ON AND OFF THE TURF with BRIAN LEE

POINT-TO-POINT enthusiasts will welcome the arrival of John Beasley's *Big Green Annual 2016,* a pictorial record of the 2015-16 hunt-racing season.

A number of owners, riders and trainers from the Vale appear in its 192 pages and these include owner/trainer Andrew Quick, the man who seems to have a particular liking to grey horses, such as his *Sangfroid*, which finished third at Ystradowen.

People like Andrew, who trains his horses on a local farmer's field, are the backbone of the sport and it is always nice to see them train a winner, which he seems determined to do this season.

There are several pictures of the Llangeinor and Pentyrch meeting at Pyle where Cowbridge's Byron Moorcroft was in good form and the stunning photographs taken at meetings up and down the country never fail to amaze me.

The book costs £26.95 plus £4.95 p&p and can be obtained by phoning 01202 309489 or by writing to Paleface Publications, 30 Thistlebarrow Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7AL.

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Spring is in the air for Erin Scurrah

ERIN Scurrah, a year-9 pupil at Pencoed Comprehensive School, has taken part in the Welsh National Schools Com-petition for the under-14 age group, where she came a superb fourth in her trampoline section, which placed her 11th out of 80 in Wales.

The competition required competitors to do two routines, and the second routine can have a more complex ending than the first.

Erin has always been excellent at preparation and her goal was to do two clean routines.

Erin came 11th in the competition which is a testimony to her hard work and perseverance.

AP

Cowbridge body builder placed in UK's top three

On October 16, Simon Gooding, a retained Cowbridge fireman, took third place in the United Kingdom Drug Free Bodybuilding Association national final held in Coventry.

The UK finals competition takes the best physiques from six qualifiers across the country to compete against each other at the final.

Simon, a keen member of Cowbridge Gym, said: "In preparation for this competition, I reduced my body fat to around five per cent while maintaining my muscle mass.

"I planned my own training, nutrition and posing – hard work especially as you are competing against the best in the UK'

The judges' said: "Third place Simon Gooding, the Southern Counties winner, had clearly taken his feedback on board and grabbed the bronze medal slot with a fuller, harder physique than at the qualifier."

Simon has been training from the age of 16 for competitions such as this and has studied the importance of both nutrition and training.

Simon explained: "I developed a passion for training from a young age and now am developing this into an exciting career, As a qualified personal trainer I am developing my business model to be a 'portable personal trainer', in other words, bringing the training to those that are not wanting to go to a gym or maybe not able to get there."

Simon Gooding

Sully makes slow start to the bowls season

SULLY welcomed Newport to Sully Stadium expecting a close game as in previous years.

Sully got off too a poor start, with Newport taking full advantage going into a 13-shot lead at the end of the fifth, with all Sully rinks behind.

Eventually Sully players began to compete, with the rink of Brian Gist, John Jones, Graham Cogbill and skip Matt Gershenson taking a four-shot lead helping to close the gap to one by the end of the tenth with the score 55–56.

Over the next five ends, Sully began to take charge on four of the six rinks and although the rinks of Brian Griffiths and Ken McLeod were both behind by six shots, Sully retained their lead at the 15 end, 84–82.

The game was now entering the final quarter and Sully were now in a winning position and with the rinks of Dick Cowling, Chris Ackland and Matt Gershenson winning their games.

Sully were looking good but the remaining rinks went into meltdown.

Fred Phillips' rink including Andrew Morgan, Steve Close and Peter Hocking had led a very good Newport rink up to end 18, then dropped a seven and a four on the final end when attempting to recover their deficit, losing 18–27.

The rink of Gary Eastment, Clive Collins, Dave Curtis and Brian Griffiths scored four shots on the first end but that was the only time they were ahead, as their opposition won 13 ends to Sully's eight winning 18–28.

Ken McLeod supported by John Best, Roy Richards and Rod Hudson, struggled all through the game never getting to grips with their opponents, eventually losing by eight shots (12–20). Having been in a positive position at the 16th end, Sully were disappointed to lose this game by 13 shots (112–125) and taking only six points against Newport's 16.

Awards for Dinas Ladies golfers

ON November 4 Dinas Powis Golf Club held a successful presentation night.

The Ladies Club Champion was Carolyn Jones, and Sue Bridle was the runner up. Golfer of the Year was Vicki Ellison and the winner of the Bronze Championship was Ruth Yates and Audrey Harwood was the runner up.

The results for competitions played in November are as follows: November 1, Turkey Trot 2, a nine-hole Stableford Comp: First, Maxine Hird 21pts; second, Sue Thomas 17pts; third, Rhian Thomas 17pts.

On November 8, Turkey Trot 3, a nine-hole medal: First, Audrey Harwood 47–13 = 34 nett; second, Ruth Yates 48–13 = 35; third, Sue Bridle 46-9 = 37 on back 6 from Sam Saunders 53–16 = 37.

On November 15, Turkey Trot 4, a nine-hole Stableford: first, Sally Livsey Davies 18pts; second, Ruth Yates 17pts on back 6 from third Dorothy Amery 17pts.

Congratulations to all our winners.

RUTH YATES

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St Athan march on in Intermediate Cup

SAINTS marched on to round 4 of the South Wales FA Intermediate Cup with an emphatic 4-1 away victory against Treorchy.

Skipper Jordan Mortimore bagged a brace while Josh Harfoot added a well-worked goal after Josh Morgan had opened the scoring from the penalty spot.

James Austin, Karl Steel, Richie Humphreys and Nicky Cox were all missing, while Mark Drysdale and Jonathan Ashton will likely miss the rest of the campaign, Drysdale posted to parts unknown while Ashton was confined to Aberystwyth.

In came Tony Charles, another attempt to retire foiled; Josh Harfoot and Jon Ball returned to the squad, Jamie Robinson and Tony Pugh were recalled from the reserves, while veteran Steve Stock was brought in between the sticks.

It was the home side who made the better start but couldn't convert their territory into a clear cut chance, with Saints defenders blocking any site of goal with some good challenges.

St Athan got going and produced some fine football in the middle of the park, that saw Reece Lewis play in Mortimore but his first time side foot effort was well palmed away by the Treorchy number one.

The home side then saw their best effort, as a flick on put the forward in but Stock pulled off a fine save to deny the hosts. Then Saints breathed a huge sigh of relief as moments later the home front man was put in one on one but rolled his shot just wide of the post after Stock gave him the eyes.

Then the breakthrough, right on half time, a half cleared corner landed to Reece Lewis and he was taken down in the area and spot kick awarded. Josh Morgan stepped up to neatly roll the ball in from 12 yards and Saints had the lead.

Manager Bill Laing was not happy after the first half performance and made his feeling clear at half time, Saints needed to up their game.

And up it they did. Five minutes into the second period, Stock collected the ball in his area and bowled it out to Brad Young at left back. His ball found Lewis, inside to Morgan, Morgan in turn played in Mortimore, who coolly finished to double the away side's lead.

Treorchy rallied and saw two lobbed efforts narrowly over before Saints put the tie to bed.

Mortimore picked up the ball from deep and skinned two defenders before crossing from the left with the outside of his right boot (to the delight of the capacity crowd) to Morgan whose knockdown was pin-point perfect into Harfoot's path who finished with aplomb into the roof of the net.

Treorchy threw caution to the wind and knew pulling one back could spark a comeback. Their forwards forcing Stock into another save before fizzing a shot inches wide.

Then controversy, a cross whipped in was met on the half volley, net rippled, the ball was not in it. The home side claimed a goal, the referee ruled that the ball had hit the side netting. Needless to say the home side were unimpressed, the ghost goal was not given, and more net pegs would have been added on to the agenda at the AGM.

Saints made sure that even if that goal had stood, it wouldn't have mattered. The away side broke down the other end, Leigh Lewis' back heel played in Mortimore who finished with ease under the keeper for his second of the game.

St Athan are in the hat for the next round despite not quite being at their best. Midfield duo Reece Lewis and Joe Laing worked themselves into the ground in the middle of the park, while Deon Garrison and Tony Charles were colossus at centre halves.

The result sees St Athan into the last 16 of the competition and the only Vale League representative left now after Vale United, Cowbridge and Rhoose were all eliminated.

St Athan: Stock, Ball, Young, Garrison, Charles, Laing, R Lewis, Harfoot, L Lewis, Mortimore, Morgan. Subs:Robinson, Pugh.

We'd like to thank our sponsors, Owens Motor Services, Llandow, Diving & Marine Engineering, Green Future Landscaping, Llantwit Valet & Car Wash and The Four Bells in St Athan.

HD

DAI'S EYES ON THE PRIZE

PENLLYNE farmer David Llewellyn, better known throughout the Vale as 'Dai,' proved a very popular winner of the recently-held monthly meeting of the Glamorgan Farmers' Golf Society at Radyr Golf Club.

First time winner Dai Llewellyn receiving his prize from sponsor Andrew Thomas.

Having struggled with his game for quite some time, a decision taken earlier this year to seek professional assistance certainly paid dividends when Dai returned a winning score of 31 stableford points to collect the Herbert R Thomas & Co Cup from the day's generous sponsor, Mr Andrew Thomas.

In second place with 30 points was Reg Davies, followed by Bryan Owen with 29 points. Julian Golunski finished in fourth with 29 points.

Sponsors representative Robert Calcaterra easily won the visitors' section with the top score of the day of 32 points, followed by Bryan Jones (Brecon) who finished with 25 points. Robert also had the satisfaction of being nearest the pin on one of the Watts & Morgan (Cowbridge) sponsored par-3 holes, together with Robbie Llewellyn, Trevor Wooding, Peter Francis (Pencoed) and Reg Davies.

Yet another Penllyne resident, Ian Taylor, returned home with a prize when hitting the longest drive on the Bear Hotel, Cowbridge-sponsored hole ,leaving only Bob Evans from the same village to return home without a prize.

Sponsor Andrew Thomas hit a winning note when correctly guessing 43 balls would fail to return home to collect the Premier Turf-sponsored bottle of whisky that raised £80 for the Alzheimer's Society.

The society's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15 at the RAF St Athan Golf Club, which once again will feature a special competition for the over-80s, of which there are quite a few.

T McC

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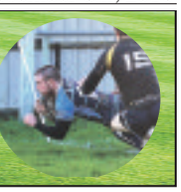

Double success for Cowbridge – Firsts win away and Youth team wins a thriller

There were excellent results for both teams last Saturday as the First XV travelled to Caerau Ely and withstood a very physical challenge to emerge winners, whilst at home the Youth were in an exciting round of the WRU Cup winning by 25–23 against Senghenydd.

The biting cold of the week gave way to sunshine and soft ground at Trelai. With the exchanges about even after six minutes, a great scoop up at the back of the lineout saw captain Richie Howson set off at pace then off-load to No 8 Dan Holder, who dummied and dodged past defenders before passing to second row Jac Anderson outside him for an unconverted try.

Minutes later a dropped pass in the Caerau mid field resulted in wing Will Williams burning up the touchline – but the final pass to scrum half Adam Dix was adjudged forward.

Caerau got the next score, a kick by Cowbridge was run back by their outside centre and finished by the full back with extras added.

During this half there were great runs by prop Sam Richards and Dix, and crucial last ditch tackles by Dix and Alex Guard.

After 30 minutes, Caerau added a penalty bringing a half time score of 10–5. The back row of Holder, Howson and Rhod Walker were having to cover every blade of grass to keep Caerau at bay.

Into the second half and five minutes in a penalty to Cowbridge was moved left. Full back James Phillips came into the line and chipped ahead. The kick wasn't fielded by Caerau's defence and Philips was there to gather and go over. Adam Dix added the conversion.

Two minutes later, after great rucking by the forwards the ball was moved left again to wing Luke James who, with a show and go that bamboozled everyone, set off again with Phillips on his shoulder and put him away for a second try that Dix again converted.

Shortly after that, war horse Dai Breed came to the side lines and Jon Phillips entered the fray. At the midpoint, a high tackle resulted in a yellow card for Caerau's full back.

Taking advantage and with the ball moved through the back division beautifully, Phillips got his hat-trick.

Up front second row Kieran David and the wonderfully named hooker Brad Langenhoeven were in the thick of things . With five minutes to go, a run by David was taken on by Holder who repeated the first try by dummying and then releasing the final pass to Anderson for a deserved try crafted by both young forwards.

The extras were added by Dix and although the opposition became more fractious, Cowbridge held out for a fine bonus point win by 10–31.

The forwards laid the platform but there were great hands behind through outside half Alex Guard and centres the 2 Gs, George and Graham, with great finishing.

The Youth took on previously unbeaten Senghenydd in the last 16 of the WRU Cup .

The score at half time was 10–11 but Cowbridge had two men yellow carded almost at the same time and finished the half with 13.

Tries came from outside half Bevan Howells and wing Jac Roberts. Cowbridge took a hold in the second half with tries by second row Cameron Roy, and an absolute stunner by wing Max Cunnington (one of the best seen at the ground for many years) and Luke John.

Senghenydd fought to the end and got their reward with a late try to narrow the scores to 25-23. A great effort by the whole team and now into the quarter finals.

There is no game for the First XV this Saturday but the Youth take on Cardiff Met at home, 1pm, but check at the club to confirm. Attention then moves to the much-anticipated away game at Llantwit on December 17. All players are asked to make themselves available.

Llantwit are the favourites on paper, second in the league and going well. But as they say games are not played on paper so let's hope for a (Christmas) cracker of a game.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank The GEM for it's coverage and to wish all readers a very happy Christmas and New Year

RK/RV

COWBRIDGE DARTS LEAGUE ROUND-UP

ON Tuesday, November 29 the mid season finals night was held at the Edmondes Arms.

To start off the evening the two Mixed Doubles semi-finals were played, these were both close 2-1 games.

The winning pairs were Tony Gratton and Lisa Gratton from the Six Bells Inn and Rhys Jury and Lynda Smith from the Edmondes A.

This ensured that there were members of the Gratton family playing in all the evening's finals.

The opening final of the evening was the Clive Blick Trophy (CBT) final.

The winners were last year's champions: Sally McCaver, Rob McCaver and John Izzard (Hairy Farmers) who defeated Lisa Gratton, Tony Gratton and Ryan Gratton (Six Bells Inn) 3-0.

However, the score line does not tell the story of this game. The winners were outscored in every leg, but still got to the necessary double first!

Next match was the Fours Final. This was an extremely close game going all the way to the fifth and deciding leg. The winners were the Edmondes C team of Marc Lasseter, Richard Williams, Barry Sullivan, Gordon Williams, Cenydd Thomas and Darren Fitzpatrick. Runners-up were the team from the Six Bells: Tony Gratton, Ryan Gratton, James Walters, Tim Lewis and Lisa Gratton.

The evening concluded with the Mixed Doubles Final. This was another very close match going all the way to the fifth leg. Initially Rhys Jury and Lynda Smith (Edmondes A) took a 2-1 lead. However, determined not to be runners-up again, Tony and Lisa Gratton (Six Bells) fought back to win 3-2, with Lisa getting the all-important final double.

Highest out of the night was Tony Gratton 71 (treble 17, double 10). No 180s were hit but both Ryan Gratton and Rhys Jury came very close, both hitting a lot of 140s.

League standings remain unchanged: Edmondes B (60 points), Six Bells Inn (53), Highwayman Inn (51), Edmondes A (43), Edmondes C (41), Hairy Farmers (40), Llanharry and Farmers Arms (38), Victoria Inn (36) and Red Lion (5).

Next week (Tuesday, December 13) a full programme of league matches is scheduled. The Edmondes B hosts the Edmondes C, the Farmers Arms hosts the Edmondes A, the Red Lion hosts the Victoria Inn, the Six Bells Inn hosts Llanharry and the Highwayman Inn hosts the Hairy Farmers.

All matches start at 8.15pm and spectators are always welcome. For further information e-mail Paul at cowbridgedarts@gmail.com, up-to-date information can be found on the website: www.darts.apsn.co.uk.

PJT

BEN LANDS A JUDO SILVER IN HOLLAND

BEN MOORE, a year-7 pupil at Cowbridge Comprehensive School, is on his way back from Holland after competing in the Den Helder international judo open as part of the British Judo Council team (BJC) at the weekend.

Ben faced a large group of experienced players but he battled his way through to the final.

After a tough fight he narrowly lost out to a very skilled Dutch opponent. This meant Ben was awarded silver! Well done Ben – an outstanding achievement.

RIGHT: Ben Moore with his silver trophy.

Para-vaulting success for Heronsbridge pupil

A PUPIL from Heronsbridge School in Bridgend has become the national champion in a sport that combines the power and balance of gymnastics with the elegance of equestrianism.

Sixteen-year-old Josh Johns has won a Welsh title in para-vaulting, which involves performing a range of gymnastic movements while on the back of a moving horse.

Heronsbridge have assembled the only para-vaulting school team in Wales, and their students are doing so well in the sport that Josh recently became the national champ in the para walk individual class, while fellow pupil Jack Garrod came second.

Every week, Heronsbridge take a group of nine pupils to the Talygarn Equestrian Centre near Pontyclun to develop their skills.

Teacher Alana Harries said: "My daughter rides at Talygarn, and the owner and I felt that vaulting would be a great opportunity for pupils with additional needs, so I approached our headteacher who absolutely loved the idea.

"The students were all a little nervous about the first session, not quite knowing what to expect but that soon diminished and they all now really look forward to it. Every time that they see me in the corridor they ask me, "Are we vaulting this week Miss?"

"They have really enjoyed the opportunity and have gained both physically and mentally from their participation. Gymnastics and horsemanship make for a fantastic sport, and para-vaulting provides a lot of what the students need in a fun and challenging way."

Alana added: "On behalf of everyone at the school, I'd like to thank Chris and Steve Rogers, who own Talygarn Equestrian Centre, and the coaches Sophie Jones and Kim Isidoro for everything they have done with the pupils so far."

Coun Huw David, the Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council, said: "Well done to all of the pupils at Heronsbridge School on their achievements in para-vaulting so far. Riding a horse is a difficult skill in itself, so to combine that with gymnastics takes real talent.

"Well done also to the staff at Heronsbridge for recognising this unique learning opportunity which is proving to be beneficial to the pupils in so many ways."